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WANDERINGS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Hradčany and the Charles Bridge, Prague

WANDERINGS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

BY

GERALD DRUCE
M.Sc. (Lond.), R.Nat.Dr. (Prague), F.I.C.
Honorary Foreign Member of the Masaryk Academy of Work

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PREFACE

Few countries have so much to interest the traveller as Czechoslovakia. Within its frontiers are the world-renowned spas of Karlsbad and Marienbad, the primeval woods of the Bohemian Forest, and the delightful scenery of the Giant's Mountains and the High Tatras in Slovakia.

Many of the cities, like Prague, Brno and Bratislava, are teeming with historical associations, whilst there are many numerous small towns off the beaten track which well repay the trouble of a visit.

The present volume is the outcome of repeated visits and prolonged stays in various parts of Czechoslovakia during the last ten years. During this time the author has made opportunities to see as many resorts, towns, villages and places of interest as possible, and to make excursions in all parts of the country, so that nothing of importance or special interest has been omitted.

Each year more and more visitors attend congresses at Prague, and fairs there and at Liberec (Reichenberg) and Bratislava, and all are tempted to linger longer in order to see more of the country. This volume is intended to serve as a guide to these visitors and other travellers who are sure to endeavour to return again to Czechoslovakia, for its charms are so varied that some aspect of these is bound to captivate the observant traveller.

The author acknowledges his indebtedness to many Czechoslovak friends who have assisted him in becoming better acquainted with their country, its people and their traditions and aspirations.

WANDERINGS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of the consequences of the Great War has been the dissolution of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire into its component parts, including the resuscitation of the former kingdom of Bohemia in the form of the new State of Czechoslovakia.

Reference to the map will show that Czechoslovakia lies in the centre of Europe. It has an elongated shape stretching from Bohemia in the west to Ruthenia in the east—a distance of about 640 miles. At its widest part, from north to south Bohemia, the breadth is 180 miles, whilst in Slovakia it narrows in places to no more than 40 miles from the Polish to the Hungarian frontiers. It is bounded on the west by Germany, and along the northern side by Germany and Poland. Along the southern side it has adjacent frontiers with Austria, Hungary and Rumania.

Czechoslovakia has been formed from the crown lands of Bohemia, Moravia and a part of East Silesia (all previously in Austria), together with Slovakia and Ruthenia or Sub-Carpathian Russia, which were formerly in Hungary. One parish, Hlučinsko, in German Silesia, inhabited by people speaking a Czech dialect, has also been ceded to Czechoslovakia. In size it occupies fifteenth place among the countries of Europe; in population (about 14 million inhabitants) it is ninth. It comes sixth in position with regard to its export and import trade, and it is the same in respect of density of population, which is ninety-seven to the square kilometre. The density is greatest in the industrial districts of Silesia and least in the wooded mountains of Ruthenia. The majority of

the people are Roman Catholics, but about half a million have broken away to found a Czechoslovak National Church. About 8 per cent. of the population are Protestants, nearly 1 per cent. belong to the Greek and Armenian (Uniate) Catholic Churches, whilst 2·6 per cent. are Jews; and 5 per cent. profess no religion at all.

The foundations and the early history of the Kingdom of Bohemia are legendary. It is said that one Čech, standing on the Řip hill near Prague, surveyed the uninhabited country around and decided to make it the home of his people. There is evidence, however, that Czechoslovakia must have been inhabited in prehistoric times. The Romans found a Celtic tribe, the Boji, in possession just before the Christian era. The Latinised name Bojohemium was applied by them to this territory, which extended farther eastward than the province of Bohemia does to-day. The Boji were largely expelled by the germanic Marcomanni, who in turn gave way to the Czechs, who settled in the country about the fifth century.

Samo, who flourished about the seventh century, is mentioned as having defeated the Avars and also the Franks in the neighbourhood of Cheb (Eger). The founding of Prague in the eighth century is attributed to the semi-mythical Krok and his younger daughter, Libuša. Libuša ruled for some time as queen and married Přemysl, a peasant farmer, and they began a line of rulers which lasted until 1306. The eleventh-century chronicler, Cosmas, states that the ploughman's boots worn by Přemysl were still to be seen at the Duke's chamber in Vyšehrad at the time when he wrote.

In the ninth century the "Great Moravian Empire" reached its zenith under Svatopluk, who ruled over much more than modern Moravia, for in his day it embraced Bohemia, Slovakia, Silesia and parts of modern Poland and Hungary as well. It was about this time that Christianity was introduced by St. Methodius and St. Cyrill, who came

National Costumes

Wenceslas Square, Prague

to Moravia from Thessalonica by way of Bulgaria, where they had converted the ruler, Boris. The Přemyslid prince, Borivoj, was baptised by Methodius, and although not all the people followed his example, a beginning at least had been made. St. Cyrill is best remembered as the author (in Bulgaria) of the Russian alphabet, called Cyrillic after him.

Borivoj's elder son, Spitihnev, sided with those Czechs who retained their paganism. As these were still the more powerful, Spitihnev was able to usurp his father's position. But the second son, Vratislav, was placed under the care of Methodius and grew up in the new faith. Of Vratislav's two sons who succeeded him, the elder, Wenceslas (or Václav as it is written in Czech), was particularly pious, and did much to further the Christian cause in his barbarous age. On the other hand, his brother Boleslav formed a faction in favour of a revival of the heathen doctrines. He invited Wenceslas to the town of Boleslav, where he proposed to christen his son; but as Wenceslas was about to enter the church Boleslav murdered him, and so earned the title Boleslav the Cruel. This happened in the year 929, and the thousandth anniversary of St. Wenceslas' death (he was afterwards canonised) was celebrated throughout Czechoslovakia in 1929. His equestrian statue stands at the top of Prague's main thoroughfare, Václavské náměsti (Wenceslas Square), named in his honour.

Boleslav I (929–967) and his son, Boleslav II (967–999), extended their domains in several directions, but Boleslav III (999–1002) lost much of his northern and eastern possessions to Poland, and his general unpopularity led the Czech nobles to invite Vladiroj of Poland (a son of the Czechoslovak Princess Dubravka) to rule over them. He did so for a year, but declared himself a vassal of Henry the Fowler of Germany. For a time powerful nobles ruled independently, but eventually Břetislav I

(1037–1055) managed to secure a firm grip over the whole country, and even enlarged his possessions by acquiring East Moravia (*i.e.* Slovakia), Silesia and the part of Poland that had been taken and lost again. It was he who fortified the Danube port of Bratislava, which is named after him. In order to establish the Přemyslid dynasty more securely he decreed that the oldest member of the family should rule. Thus it happened that he was succeeded first by his eldest son, Spitihnev II (1055–1061), and then by his second son, Vratislav (1061–1092), who was the first ruler to assume the title of king, a title which was admitted by Henry IV of Germany, whom he had assisted in a struggle with the Pope and against unruly nobles. One result of this alliance was that Germans and Jews were encouraged to settle in Prague.

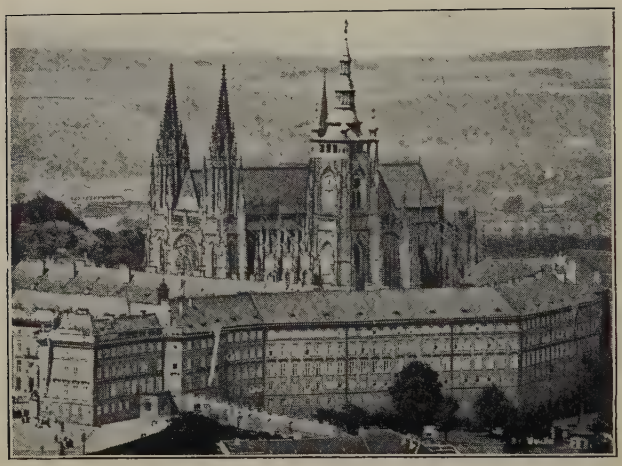
Nothing of special importance occurred from this time till 1156, when the German Emperor, Barbarossa, ceded Upper Lusatia to Vladislav II (1140–1173) in consideration of assistance in his Italian campaign. Within the kingdom internal dissensions followed towards the close of this reign, although Vladislav had been very popular at first. He was ultimately forced to abdicate, and the troubles continued until 1197, when Přemysl Otakar (1192–1230) became undisputed king. His son Wenceslas (Václav) I (1230–1253) succeeded as first king of that name, and is noteworthy because he assigned the ruling of Moravia to his son, who later became Přemysl Otakar II (1253–1278). Otakar joined with some malcontents against his father, but after one or two conflicts a reconciliation took place before the old king's death. Otakar also secured possession of certain Austrian archduchies, including Styria, the right to which was claimed by Hungary. By force of arms Otakar not only made good his claim, but also conquered Carinthia, Istria and parts of northern Italy and Jugoslavia. His territory thus extended from Lusatia to the Adriatic Sea, and probably

only his Slav nationality prevented his becoming Holy Roman Emperor. This passed, in 1273, to Rudolf of Hapsburg, who thereupon laid claim to much of the land that Otakar had acquired. In 1276 Rudolf entered Austria, and many of the nobles joined him, although the towns, including Vienna, held out for Otakar, until it was obvious that he must lose, since his ally, Ladislaus of Hungary, had deserted him. The Bohemian nobles, too, were already tired of the demands made upon them for the prosecution of these wars, but Otakar himself was undaunted and determined not to yield without a struggle, and died fighting in an attempt to regain some of his lost territory.

His son Wenceslas (Václav) II (1278–1305) was only seven years old at the time of his father's death, so that Otto of Brandenburg became regent. Complete anarchy characterised his early years. Power concentrated in the hands of Zavis of Falkenstein, a nobleman who had married the widowed queen-mother, Kunagund, Duchess of Opava in Silesia. In 1292 Wenceslas was able to have Zavis beheaded on some pretext, soon after his mother had died, and the rest of his reign was marked with general contentment. Meanwhile Emperor Rudolf had generously given his help in this direction. So successfully did Wenceslas appear to rule his own country that he was offered both the Polish and Hungarian crowns as well. This led to trouble with Albert of Austria, Rudolf's successor. Just as matters reached a crisis Wenceslas died, and a year later the Přemyslid dynasty became extinct with the murder of Wenceslas III (1305–1306). The powerful Slovak, Matthew of Čak, who had offered the Hungarian crown to Wenceslas II, now maintained an independent State in that part of Slovakia which later became attached to Hungary. He made Trenčin his capital, and so advantageously was his stronghold placed that it was never taken.

Albert of Austria now began to exert his influence with the Bohemian nobles, whom he intimidated into accepting his son Rudolf as king, but the majority of the assembly reserved the right to elect their ruler, and Henry of Carinthia (1307–1310) was chosen, largely because he had married Wenceslas' daughter. He did not prove a successful ruler, however, and was superseded by John of Luxemburg (1310–1346), who was enthusiastically elected king, and whose House ruled until 1437. John enhanced his popularity by marrying Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Wenceslas II, but as he spent so much of his life in helping all kinds of good causes throughout Europe, from Lithuania in the north to Italy in the south, he lost some of the affection of his Bohemian subjects. A phrase was coined of him to the effect that nothing could succeed without the help of God and the King of Bohemia. He died fighting for France against England at Crecy in 1346, and was succeeded by Charles IV, one of the greatest rulers of the kingdom.

Charles IV (1346–1378), although born in Prague, had been sent to France to be educated, and on his succession he gathered around him many cultured men of arts and science. In 1348 he definitely established the Caroline University of Prague, modelled on the lines of those at Paris and Bologna, with which he was well acquainted. He was anxious to have a seat of learning independent of the clergy. The university soon attracted so many students that the city's accommodation became inadequate. Charles thereupon invited Matthew of Arras, a celebrated French architect, to supervise the construction of a new part of the city. This is still known as Nové Město (New Town), and its chief square is Karlovo náměsti (Charles Square). The castle on Hradčany and St. Vitus' Cathedral were also begun by Matthew of Arras. The completion of these was carried out by Peter Parler, and the tombs of these two fourteenth-century architects have recently



St. Vitus Cathedral, Prague

been discovered under St. Vitus' Cathedral during excavations for Roman remains. Charles also built the first stone bridge over the River Vltava, the Karlův Most, with towers at each end, and later each buttress was adorned by a statue or group of religious figures. He also built the castle of Karlův Týn or Karlstein, from plans drawn up by Matthew of Arras. Here he kept the crown jewels, and also retired for private meditations.

The "Hunger Wall" skirting the New Town was built by Charles during a famine crisis in order to employ destitute workmen, and there are many evidences that Charles, who became Holy Roman Emperor as well as King of Bohemia, was a very enlightened monarch.

He was succeeded by his son Wenceslas IV (1378–1419), whose reign saw the decline of the Luxemburg dynasty, which had risen so remarkably in his father's time. He quarrelled with the clergy, and it is said that John of Nepomuk was thrown from the Charles bridge into the Vltava at his instigation. In 1381 Princess Anne, daughter of Charles, married Richard II of England, and among the connections made between the two countries were the bringing of Wyclif's teaching to the Czech religious reformers, John Hus and Jerome (Hieronymus) of Prague.

John (or Jan) Hus was born of poor parents in the village of Husinec in South Bohemia about 1369. He came to Prague at an early age, and in 1393 took the B.A. degree at the university. He quickly established himself as a learned man by obtaining the M.A. and Divinity degrees. He served as dean and also as rector of the university at an unusually early age. His brilliant sermons at the Bethlehem Chapel attracted large congregations, and although he strongly condemned certain Church practices and was ultimately burned at the stake in 1415 at Constance as a heretic, he always maintained that he remained a Catholic.

Whilst the king was indifferent to the fervent preacher, Queen Sophia favoured him in many ways, and he had the support of the Bohemian clergy and nobles in his disputes with the ecclesiastical superiors. His death was followed by a series of wars, which began by being religious ones, but ultimately became dynastic as well. Wenceslas IV died in 1419, and after several regencies was succeeded by the powerful Sigismund of Hungary, who was against the Hussites. These defeated him in a battle near Vyšehrad. Under their blind leader, Žižka, the Hussites met with a number of successes and established an important fortified camp at Tábor (Czech Tábor—a camp), and they soon had command of most of the Bohemian and Moravian towns, and also held many in Slovakia.

The Bohemian nobles then reasserted their right to elect their ruler, and chose Sigismund Korybut of Poland (1436–1437). The Pope vetoed the election and ordered a crusade against the Czech heretics. His army of mercenaries was again decisively defeated, as it had been previously at Domažlice in 1431. In all, five vain attempts were made to crush the Hussites. But what could not be accomplished by force of arms was, however, to occur from within. The moderate Utraquists and the more radical Táborites among the Hussites began to disagree so much among themselves that their dissensions paved the way for a sectional return to Rome under pressure from outside.

After some hesitation the estates elected Albert of Austria as king (1437–1439), but his brief reign reopened the question of the succession, which went to his posthumous son Ladislaus (1439–1457), who spent his boyhood in Austria, so that the country was largely without a definite Government. Upon the king's death the estates, not only of Bohemia but also of Moravia and Silesia, again met to reaffirm the elective as opposed to the

The Macocha Caves in Moravia

hereditary principle of the monarchy, and then enthusiastically elected the shrewd and just George of Poděbrady as king (1458–1471). He was the first Protestant king, and did much to restore order and prosperity in spite of trouble with the Pope, who would not recognise him, and who encouraged Matthias of Hungary to attack Bohemia. The Utraquist bishop at this time was John of Rokycany, whilst an Englishman, Peter Payne, was also a prominent figure in contemporary Prague life.

Upon King George's death the Polish Prince, Vladislav II (1471–1516) was elected king. He became later ruler of Hungary as well, and this brought him into conflict with Maximilian of Austria, who also claimed that throne, and began by seizing Sopron in west Hungary and Bratislava (Pressburg) on the Danube. Vladislav was succeeded by his son Louis (1516–1526), who resided in Hungary, which at this time was even more unsettled than Bohemia. At his death after the disastrous battle of Mohacs, where the Turks defeated the Christians, the crown of Bohemia passed to Ferdinand I of Austria (1526–1564), who had married Louis' sister. Whilst the Turks held Hungary (of which Bratislava became the capital for a time), and even penetrated into southern Slovakia, Ferdinand and his successor Maximilian (1564–1576) tolerated the reformation in Bohemia, and it was largely maintained by Rudolf II (1576–1612), in spite of sharp reminders from the Pope. Rudolf acknowledged the reformers in 1607, but his successor, Matthias (1612–1619), did not. At this time the *Unitas Fratrum*, or Bohemian (Moravian) Brethren, possessed over three hundred Protestant Churches. By 1627, however, none remained to them, so great was the persecution.

The reign of Rudolf II is important because it witnessed the return of greatness to Prague. Rudolf, himself an educated man, encouraged Art and Science, and attracted many distinguished persons to his capital. Among them

were the astronomers, Tycho Brahe, whose tomb is in the Týn Church, and Kepler. Rudolf has been accused of necromancy on this account, but it is more probable that he was an enlightened monarch who liberally assisted the pursuit of knowledge. At that time Alchemy was engaging the attention of learned men, and a country rich in minerals like Bohemia would be a fruitful field for experiments. Rudolf studied transmutation processes himself, and invited Dr. John Dee and Edward Kelley from England to visit Prague and perform their "projections" before him. The emperor was not alone in his endeavours to make gold from base metal, for the powerful counts Rožmberk (Rosenberg) in South Bohemia also persuaded Dee and Kelley to stay in Krumlov and Třeboň, probably in the hope of obtaining the secret of the "philosophers' stone". In other directions scientific knowledge developed, for herb gardens were cultivated, especially where there was fertile land attached to the monasteries. Medicine and pharmacy extended, and many apothecaries' shops opened in Rudolf's reign. They are noteworthy because the houses bore quaint bilingual inscriptions, *e.g.* U Andělu—Ad Angelum; U Skřidlice—Ad Rupes, etc. Later the Latin was displaced by German, and it is still possible to see over the doors of many pharmacies such inscriptions as "U bileho Andělu—Zum weissen Engel", "U svateho Ducha—Zum Heilige Geist", etc.

The religious repression of Matthias, Rudolf's successor, was resisted by the estates, and on his death they proceeded to elect the Protestant Frederick of the Palatinate, son-in-law of James I of England, as king (1619–1620); but Matthias's son, Ferdinand II (1620–1637), also claimed the crown. The issue was decided at the battle of the White Mountain, in which the Bohemians were defeated. It ended in Frederick's flight, and Ferdinand annexed the Bohemian lands to the Hapsburg possessions,

to which they remained attached until the revolution in 1918 at the end of the Great War.

After the battle of the White Mountain in 1620 a few towns still held out against Ferdinand II for a time, and the Protestants were rallied by the victories of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden in 1631; but the Hapsburgs eventually obtained complete control of the country, and with the help of the Jesuits they firmly fixed the orthodox Roman Catholic religion upon the people. Protestant books were destroyed, printing-presses were carefully controlled, colleges became Jesuit seminaries, statues of Hus and Žižka and other "heretics" were demolished, and in 1622 the Utraquists were expelled from the Týn Church.

German aristocracy, judges and officials were introduced, and attempts were made to limit the use of the Bohemian language. The study of Science and Literature, so flourishing in Rudolf's reign, almost died out; trade decayed, and the population diminished. The real history of the nation at this time is to be sought among those driven into exile. The most noteworthy of these was Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius), who was forced to leave Moravia and flee to Poland, where he joined others of the Bohemian Brethren at Lešno (Lissa). Comenius had studied at Heidelberg, and had naturally supported Frederick in 1619, having, in fact, preached his coronation sermon at Prague. In exile, he taught the Brethren and wrote a number of works, some of which are widely read to this day, *e.g.* the *Way of Light* and *Labyrinth of the World.* He impressed all with whom he came in contact, including some English merchants at Dantzig. One of them, Samuel Hartlib, invited Comenius to visit England, where he met the learned men of the time, just as the Royal Society was being founded.

At home in Bohemia the reigns of Leopold I (1657–1705), Joseph I (1705–1711), Charles VI (1711–1740),

and Maria Theresa (1740–1780), who succeeded in accordance with the Pragmatic sanction, saw little change in policy. Settlements of German colonists were encouraged around the periphery of Bohemia, in Moravia, Silesia and the Zips towns of Slovakia. Descendants of these colonists have retained their language and customs to this day.

The accession of Joseph II (1780–1790) brought many long-overdue reforms as a consequence of his journey *incognito* through Bohemia, lifting the oppressive burdens from the poor. He still suppressed the free use of the national language, although permitting religious liberty. He discouraged printing in Bohemian and even in Latin, as he thought that conditions generally would improve when uniformity in language was attained. His successor, Leopold II (1790–1792), was persuaded by John Dobrovsky to relax this law, and even obtained a grant of money from him for the Bohemian Academy of Science. The Emperor Francis (1792–1835) continued this policy and gave his approval to the efforts in 1818 to found a Bohemian National Museum at Prague, and during the first half of last century there was a great national revival. This sometimes took a political form, as in 1848, the year of revolutions and rebellions, when there were anti-German riots which needed a strong detachment of soldiers under Prince Windischgraetz to suppress. The Bohemian riots were only a part of Austria's troubles at this time. Insurrections also took place in Hungary and in the Italian provinces. At their conclusion the Emperor Ferdinand IV (1835–1848) abdicated in favour of the young Francis Joseph (1848–1916), during whose reign many changes took place. Not the least significant of these was the rise of Prussia to the premier place among the German States, a position previously held by Austria. The Austro-Prussian War, which ended in the defeat of the Austrians at Hradec Kralové (Koniggraetz) in 1866,

Štrbské Pleso

left Austria shorn of much power, as the subsequent Treaty of Prague showed. In 1867 the Hungarians were able to secure the *Ausgleich* (Compromise) with Austria, which left foreign policy in the hands of the Crown, whilst allowing the Magyars a free hand in the kingdom of Hungary, which at that time contained more non-Magyars than Magyars. Their policy was one of forcible Magyarisation, which was pursued with particular energy against the Slovaks of Upper Hungary. Meanwhile the Czechs were obliged to put up a strong resistance to the similar attempts at Germanicising Bohemia and Moravia.

Then came the Great War. It was natural that the Czechoslovaks should show a sympathy for their south Slav kinsmen of Serbia, and also for the Russians. At once the Austrian authorities imprisoned many Czech political leaders, but some managed to leave the country in time, finding a refuge in neutral and Allied countries, where Professor Masaryk and Dr. Beneš worked with the Slovak, General Stefaník, and others for the rebirth of the nation.

Within the Dual Monarchy Czechoslovak regiments went over to the Allies whenever an opportunity presented itself, whilst those who were not called to the Army worked and waited for an occasion to declare their policy. Consequently, on January 6, 1918, the Czechs in Prague issued a "Declaration of Independence" and claimed union with Slovakia. This was followed in July by the formation of a National Council, and the claim for independence was acknowledged first by France, then Great Britain, U.S.A., and other nations. On October 28th the National Council declared the formation of an independent republic, and took over the government of the Crown lands of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. Two days later (October 30th) the Slovaks sent representatives to Turčianský Svätý Martin and declared for union with

the Czechs in the formation of one democratic Czechoslovak republic.

Professor T. G. Masaryk was elected the first President on November 14th, and this was confirmed by the National Assembly in 1920, and he was re-elected in 1927 on the expiry of his first term of office. Meanwhile in 1919 the district of Sub-Carpathian Russia (Ruthenia) unanimously approved of incorporation within Czechoslovakia on terms of autonomy. The frontiers of the State were definitely fixed by the Treaties of Versailles, St. Germain (1919) and Trianon (1920). The Těšin district of east Silesia was to have decided its fate by plebiscite, but actually the frontiers were agreed upon by the Powers concerned in 1920.

The important part played during the war by the Czechoslovak legions in Russia is not fully realised. This Czechoslovak Army, without a country, began as a brigade formed from settlers in Russia. They were augmented by those who escaped from the Austro-Hungarian troops and from among the prisoners of war. Despite difficulties with the Czarist regime their numbers increased until they counted 70,000 men. Their record for gallantry survived the collapse of the Russian forces, for they won the last Russian victory at Zborov. After the advent of the Bolsheviks the legionaries were involved involuntarily with them and fought their way across Siberia from the Ukraine to Vladivostok, and it was not until 1920 that they were able to reach their homeland, the liberation of which had been their *raison d'être*. During their *Anabasis* from the Black Sea to the Yellow Sea they took and held the whole line of the trans-Siberian railway, which they managed and maintained until they evacuated Siberia in 1920, guarding it from the depredations of the many Russian adventurers who were prominent at that time.

Since 1918 the internal policy of the successive coalition

Slovak Types

Governments in Czechoslovakia has been one of consolidation, progress and reform. They have dealt generously with their minorities, whose real grievances have been remedied. Of all the new nations they have maintained their position as well as any. Whilst their neighbours' currencies fell and vanished, they alone retain their old crown, which once sank (in sympathy with the mark and Austrian currency) to 400 to the pound sterling. But firm measures have enabled successive finance ministers to improve its value to 164 to the pound, at which figure it has stood since 1923.

The traveller from England has the choice of several convenient routes for reaching Czechoslovakia, all of which take just over thirty hours from London. The quickest way is *via* Harwich and Flushing. From Flushing there is a through carriage to Dresden and a sleeping-car as far as Leipzig. At Dresden it is necessary to change into a train which runs from Berlin to Prague *via* Leipzig and Dresden.

Another route is *via* Dover and Ostend. At Ostend you enter that carriage of the connecting express which is labelled for Vienna and Bucharest. At Nuremberg you must change, and if your train is punctual you can connect up with the one coming from Paris and bound for Cheb (Eger), Marienbad and Prague. There is now a special summer train from Ostend direct to Prague and Karlsbad. The journey from London by using this train takes only twenty-seven hours.

Still a third way is *via* Paris. The Prague train leaves Paris (Est) at five in the afternoon, and arrives at Wilson Station, Prague, at 6.30 the next evening. The Czech carriages have the mark Č.S.D. (*i.e.* Czechoslovak State Railways), and are labelled for Praha (*i.e.* Prague). The journey to Paris may be made either the day before or overnight by any of the routes from Victoria, Waterloo,

or even St. Pancras. The Paris route has the advantage that by booking in advance with any of the travel agencies you can always be sure of a seat all the way, whereas when you have to change there is a risk that no seat will be available, especially at holiday times. Single second-class fare *via* Ostend is about £5 9s., *via* Calais and Paris it is £6 9s., and over Holland it is about £6. In the past these prices have fluctuated considerably with the exchange rates and according to the finances of the States traversed. As the value of a currency dropped so travelling became relatively cheaper until the railway rates were readjusted. Thus, at one time in 1922 it was possible to travel right through Germany for about 5s. Again, in the summer of 1925 for the few weeks when the franc was around 240 to the pound this meant a saving of about a sovereign on the fare *via* Paris. Now the currencies and exchange rates in all these countries are steady there is not likely to be much alteration in the cost of the tickets.

From the point of view of cheapness the Ostend route commends itself, and is indeed the one most used by people going from England to Czechoslovakia. Whilst Belgium is flat and the scenery at first relatively uninteresting, the journey along the Rhine from Cologne onwards would be very pleasant, except that most of it is traversed at night. The way through Paris is perhaps better from the point of view of the countryside to be seen from the carriage window, especially after Nuremberg and as Czechoslovakia is approached. But whichever route is taken an observant traveller will not find the journey tedious.

The quickest way is *via* Holland, and this route is most used by Czechoslovaks coming to England. The scenery to Dresden is flat, but it is not uninteresting, and from Dresden to Prague the wooded heights and undulating parts of Saxon and Bohemian Switzerland generally will

serve to stimulate the traveller's anticipation of the beauties of Czechoslovakia.

By whichever way you go, before you have completed the thousand and nine miles which Prague is from London you must pass three frontiers and undergo three Customs and passport examinations. Usually the German and French, or Belgian, or Dutch Customs examinations are perfunctory, or are dispensed with altogether if the Customs officers see that your tickets take you directly to Prague, *i.e.* beyond their frontiers.

Passports are, of course, essential, but if British, and endorsed by our authorities for the countries through which it is proposed to travel, they need only have a Czech *visum*, and even this may soon be unnecessary.

Customs examinations and passport control are now both carried out in the train, except for luggage registered to Prague or to some spa, like Karlsbad, in which case the examination is made at the destination. It is perhaps needless to mention that dutiable articles should be declared at once to avoid the unpleasant consequences of being found with things which can then be confiscated and penalties inflicted.

On the Continent, and in Germany especially, the conductor of the train comes along the corridor soon after the departure from a station and examines or collects the tickets. He does this as each fresh passenger enters the compartment. At night this is apt to be disagreeable. It may be avoided by travelling in a sleeping-car (by paying the supplement), a procedure which also avoids the Customs and passport inspection until Czechoslovakia is reached.

Dining-cars are now attached to all long-distance trains, and it is worth while to patronise them. This affords a welcome break from the monotony of sitting in a compartment all day. Being in a chair at a table before a large window also affords a better view of the landscape

between the courses. The meals are good, well served, and the charge (25 crowns in Czechoslovakia) is little more than one would pay in an ordinary restaurant. When there are two or more times (series) for lunch or dinner, it is well to take the first, unless it is at an inconvenient hour. You then enjoy a fresh room and nicely cooked dishes; whereas if you take a later one the food may have been "warmed up", the car may reek of tobacco-smoke, and you will have to wait for the laggards of the earlier series.

If you travel *via* Ostend, and consequently have to change at Nuremberg, it is well to remember that there is only fifteen minutes in which to leave one train and enter the other. Also Central European Time is one hour in advance of Greenwich Mean Time, as we found to our dismay when having missed the connection and learned that in one-and-a-half hours there was another train. It was midday, and we went off to obtain lunch, only observing afterwards that the Nuremberg clocks were an hour in advance of our watches. The second train had gone, and we had a further seven hours to wait. Whether you enter Czechoslovakia at Cheb (Eger), Děčin (Tetschen), or Podmokly (Bodenbach), you will be struck with the babble of tongues. Even the boys selling newspapers, sweetmeats, beer, coffee or hot sausages will announce their wares in at least two languages. But the Englishman need entertain no fear of being unable to make himself understood, for he will not be expected to know Czech. If he knows German, even though it be only a little, it will be a help. French, too, is spoken by almost all the well-educated people. The Czechs are good linguists, and, if necessary, someone speaking English can always be found near at hand. Place-names at railway stations, on maps, etc., are given in the State language, *i.e.* Czechoslovak. Where there is a considerable German or other minority (above 20 per cent.), names and inscriptions appear in the minority tongue as well.

Until the entry into Czechoslovakia the need for foreign money will scarcely be felt. It is not necessary to bulge one's pockets with foreign currencies when travelling to Central Europe. For meals on the train and any incidental purchases at stations on the way English money will be accepted, usually at a premium, however. The traveller can start the journey with, say, ten shillings' worth of French or Belgian francs, or Dutch gulden and the same amount of German marks, together with about two pounds' worth of Czech crowns. The rest of the money may be carried in the form of Bank of England notes, or as travellers' cheques. These can be exchanged as needed at the banks or exchanges in Prague or in any other town, or, less advantageously, at the frontiers. A pound sterling is equivalent to 164 Czechoslovakian crowns, and the larger banks usually give 163.

It may thus be taken that 1 crown (*koruna*, abbreviated to Kč, which signifies Czechoslovak crown) is worth 1½d., and 8 crowns are approximately a shilling. The paper currency now consists of notes in denominations of 5,000, 1,000, 500, 100, 50, 20 and 10 Kč. Formerly there were also 5- and 1-crown notes, but these have been withdrawn and replaced with coins of a copper-nickel alloy containing about 5 per cent. of silver. These coins are in denominations of 1 and 5 crowns, and also 20 and 50 hellers (*halíř*, plural *haléřů*; 100 h. make 1 kč.). Small copper 5- and 10-heller pieces are often received in change, but the tiny zinc 2-heller piece had no practical use and has been withdrawn from circulation. Another coin which may be seen, but which is not in general circulation, is the ducat, a gold piece originally worth 100 crowns, or rather more than 10s. Now it is sold by banks, etc., for 85 kč., because the paper crown has appreciated somewhat in value since 1922, when these ducats and double ducats were first minted from Czech gold. It portrays St. Wenceslas, and on

the reverse bears the State arms. The paper notes have their value printed on them in five or six languages, Czech and Slovak (even when the dialects are identical), German, Hungarian, Polish and Ruthenian. New coins are to be introduced shortly. These will include the 5- and 10-crown silver pieces. The former will be about the size of a shilling, but containing only 50 per cent. of silver. The 10-crown coins will be a little larger and contain 70 per cent. of silver.

Whilst on the matter of money the vexed question of tips may be mentioned. It seems the rule in hotels and restaurants to give 10 per cent. extra for "service". This is now frequently reckoned in with the bill, so that it is well to inquire or scrutinise the account before disbursing any more.

Of Czech hotels it can be said that they are, in general, very good indeed. Those at some of the international spas are palatial and luxurious, those in the larger towns are well appointed and by no means expensive, whilst those in small towns are, in our experience, always clean even when sometimes simple. Hotels in places off the beaten track are naturally much cheaper still. Nearly all are managed by a proprietor with a pride in the establishment, so that the comfort of the visitor is considered in order to gain his good opinion and recommendation. For those who prefer to live with a family, or who wish to make a prolonged stay in one place, apartments are readily obtainable. Information on this and other matters is cheerfully given at the various tourist offices, town halls, and the managerial offices of the spas. The chief tourist agency is the Czechoslovak Tourist and Transport Company, known as Čedok, which has an office in London (21 Regent Street, W. 1). Its offices in Prague are at 7 Mikulandská ulice, 14 Hýbernská ulice and 63 Václavské náměsti. There are branches in almost every town and spa. Čedok arranges daily sightseeing trips in

and around Prague and elsewhere. The International Sleeping Car Company has a branch in Prague (Přikopy, near the Powder Tower), and another agency is Schenker's, 34 Přikopy.

The Czechoslovak Tourists' Club (5 v Jirchářích, Prague) is an important organisation of over 60,000 members, and owns thirty-one large mountain huts with accommodation quarters, as well as controlling hundreds of inns and hotels in tourist centres. It has also affixed signs to indicate routes and paths in the mountains for the convenience of tourists and climbers.

No mention has been made of the possibility and practicability of reaching Czechoslovakia by air. There are, it is true, no direct services at present from England to Central Europe, but connections can be made at Rotterdam, Paris or Cologne. The internal air services between Prague and Marienbad and other spas, and from west to east (to Brno, Bratislava, Košice and Užhorod), are well organised, and the charges are much less than first-class railway fares. The air line has a remarkable record of complete freedom from mishap during the six years it has been in operation.

CHAPTER II

THE CZECHOSLOVAKS AND THEIR LANGUAGE

The Czechs and the Slovaks, *i.e.* the Czechoslovaks, are Slavs who had settled in Central Europe during the early centuries of the Christian era. At present they form the westernmost branch of the Slavonic race. Originally a race of peasants, they have expanded their interests, especially during the last century, and have proved their worth in the various professions, in the Arts and Sciences and in commerce and industry. To-day certain of their statesmen enjoy world-wide reputations, and when the time comes there will be others ready and able to take their places.

As a race the Czechoslovaks are hard-working, and are characterised by a fondness for colour. This finds expression in their vivid and beautiful national costumes of both the men and the fair sex. These national costumes are still worn on all occasions by the peoples of the more remote districts, but in the towns such characteristic dresses are reserved for Sundays and holidays.

The political separation of the Czechs and the Slovaks for some hundreds of years created somewhat different stages of cultural development and also distinct dialects, which are recognisable in slightly different spelling and pronunciation. Slovak has only been used as a literary language for about a century, and it seems to represent an early stage of evolution in the Czechoslovak tongue, for it resembles Old Czech. Slovak also preserves certain ancient phonetic features, though Czech is more archaic in its accidence.

The language is phonetic, and when once the pronunciation of the letters has been acquired, Czechoslovak words, formidable as they seem at first sight, can be pronounced without great difficulty. With persistence it is possible

National Costumes

to acquire a working knowledge of the language sufficient for the everyday needs of the traveller. Most of the letters are pronounced as in English. The chief differences are:

c is pronounced like *ts* in its
j ,, ,, *y* in yes
ch is guttural like *ch* in Scottish loch.

The vowels have a short sound unless accented, when they are long. In addition to the accents the letter *u* is sometimes lengthened by placing a circle over it, thus Karlův Týn (pronounced Karloov Teen). Also the diacritical sign ˇ is placed over both vowels and certain consonants modifying the pronunciation:

č is pronounced like *ch* in church,
ň ,, *ny* in canyon,
ř ,, (*rz*),
š ,, *sh* in shut;

whilst ě, ľ, ď, ť are pronounced as though an *i* has been inserted after the consonant. These diacritical marks were introduced by John Hus, and enable the Czechs to transcribe readily and accurately from Russian (Cyrillic) to their own variation of the Latin alphabet. The stress is on the first syllable unless accented elsewhere. The letters *l* and *r* sometimes function as vowels, *e.g.* Vltava (pronounced Vultava) and Brno (pronounced Berno).

Nouns, etc., undergo many inflections in Czechoslovak. To begin with, there are seven cases to each of the many declensions, whilst adjectives differ in the three genders. If the traveller remembers this it will help him to learn that, for instance, *do Prahy* means *to Praha* (Prague), and *v Praze* means *in Praha*. Also feminine endings are given to proper names. Thus Mr. Novák is *Pan Novák*, whilst Mrs. Novák is *Paní Novákova*, and Miss Novák is *Slečna Novákova*.

There are many phrase books obtainable for a few pence which can be of assistance to the traveller. Mr. Paul Selver's *Czech Self-Taught* (Marlborough, 3s.) will more than suffice for all ordinary requirements, and can be cordially recommended.

CHAPTER III

PRAGUE

Unless you are going to Marienbad or Karlsbad for the "cures", you will wish to see the capital of Czechoslovakia before exploring the rest of the country. You may spend two days or two weeks, or perhaps two years, in Prague and yet not exhaust its charms and see all its many examples of architectural beauty. A leisurely way in which to obtain a good general impression of the city is to take a tram to Hradčany and then to return on foot by way of the castle, St. Vitus' Cathedral, the Golden Lane, the Old Castle Steps, crossing the river by the Charles Bridge, and reaching the Powder Tower by winding through Charles and Celetná Streets, with momentary pauses before the Old Town Hall and Týn Church. The same journey can be made for the most part by taking a droshka or cab, but you cannot then keep halting to examine more closely some doorway or old building which arrests attention. Taxis are now inexpensive, but for sightseeing the electric tramcars are almost as serviceable. The fare for any distance is 1 kč. 20 h., except after 10.30 p.m., when it is 3 crowns. It is also permissible to change on to another route provided it is not in the reverse direction to the first part of the journey. The narrow streets of the old town preclude the introduction of omnibus services. Seven routes are in operation around the city, and though they serve to link up the suburbs with outlying villages, they run at long intervals, and are of little use to the tourist. An underground railway has been proposed, but it will be a long time before it can be constructed, even when the general plans have been approved.

Prague, whose population is approaching a million, is divided like other big cities into districts. On the right

bank of the Vltava (or Moldau, as the Germans call it) are the Staré Město or Old Town, Nové Město (New Town), Vinohrady (former vineyards), and Vyšehrad or citadel, as well as the suburbs Žižkov, Karlín, etc., which are partly industrial and partly residential. On the left bank are Malá Strana (Little Side), Hradčany, Smichov and other districts.

The oldest part of Prague is Vyšehrad, which name means in Czech "higher castle". Vyšehrad is built on one of the steepest of the seven hills of Prague rising straight above the river. It still possesses Roman remains, as well as three old churches, the Karluv, with its enormous central cupola, St. Martin's and that of St. Peter and St. Paul, which was originally a Romanesque edifice erected in the eleventh century. The rotunda of St. Martin, near the ruined fortifications, is the oldest Prague church. Close by is a cemetery with the "Slavin", or Czech Parthenon, containing the tombs of prominent personages. Vyšehrad and its extension, Vinohrady, now possess some of the most recently constructed medical institutes and university buildings.

As early as the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the centre of the city had shifted to what is now the Old Town Square, and the Old Town Hall and the Týn Church were its most conspicuous structures. This church, more than any other, is wrapped up in Czech history. It was begun in the fourteenth century, and the left tower was completed during the reign of King George of Poděbrady, but the right one was only finished by 1511 under the reign of Vladislav II. The present roof dates from 1679, when the old one was destroyed by fire. The church has three naves, with a gallery adjoining the towers. The fourteenth-century pulpit, the christening font of 1414, the Gothic crucifix, the statue of the Madonna and the tomb of Tycho Brahe, the astronomer (*d.* 1601), are some of the objects of special interest. On the main

The Old Town Hall, Prague

altar is Skreta's picture of the ascent of the Virgin Mary. Until 1621, it remained the principal Utraquist church. In the square before the church is an imposing monument to John Hus, the eloquent religious reformer who was condemned as a heretic and burned at the stake at Constance in 1415.

Apart from the Town Hall, many of the other houses of the old square are noteworthy. To the left of the Týn Church is the rococo Kinsky palace, designed by Dienzenhofer and completed after his death by Anselm Lurago. The Town Hall (Radnice), which was originally transformed from a private building adapted to early municipal needs in 1338, has been rebuilt several times; the oldest remaining parts date from 1381.

The astronomical clock on the outside immediately attracts the attention of the visitor. Constructed by Hanuš in 1490, it divides the day into twenty-four hours and has a complete calendar (with leap years). The position of the planets and the moon's phases are also indicated. As the hours strike the figures of Our Lord and the Apostles appear at the windows over the dial, but the time of the clock does not always coincide with Prague time, so the (variable) difference is indicated on a tablet affixed to the wall below. The painting on the planetarium is not the original one executed by Josef Mánes for the clock, but a copy.

Inside the Town Hall the ceilings of the council room were decorated at the time of Rudolf II (1576–1612), and the original wainscotings remain. The beams hang on gilded chains, and around are the coats of arms of the various early trade guilds. The Assembly Hall (of recent date) contains two pictures of note by Václav Brožík. One depicts John Hus before the Council of Constance, and the other represents the election of George of Poděbrady as King of Bohemia in 1458. A recent addition is a painting of the Sokol (gymnastic) display at Prague in

1926. There is also a Sèvres vase, the gift of the municipality of Paris, and in another room are the remains of the Czech unknown soldier.

Among the many typical narrow, winding streets radiating from the Old Town Square (Staroměstské náměsti) is Celetná ulice, which leads to the Powder Tower (Prašná Brána), a convenient centre of the city near the railway termini and the principal hotels. It is the only remaining evidence of the Old Town fortifications, being a remnant of the eight gates of the ancient city. Built in Gothic style, it dates from 1475, although its completion was much delayed by wars. It served as a powder magazine in the seventeenth century, and in 1876–1880 it was restored, but the old staircase of 1592 is still preserved. Almost adjacent is the Obecni Dům or Representation House, a magnificent modern edifice, completed in 1911 at a cost of £300,000. It is a gathering place for the social life of Prague. Concerts are given in the Smetana Hall, named after the Czech composer. Lectures on music and the arts are given in other halls, and exhibitions are held from time to time. There are also club rooms, public restaurants and a café. The façade is decorated with mosaic work by Czech artists, representing scenes from the history of the country. Paintings of a similar kind and descriptive of Bohemian landscape are to be seen inside.

The main thoroughfare of Prague runs from the Powder Tower to the National Theatre and Legionaries' Bridge across the Vltava. At first it is called Na Příkopě, but at the junction with Wenceslas Square (Václavské náměsti) it changes to 28th October Street (Ulice 28 Řijna), which again gives place to National Avenue (Národní třída), a few hundred yards lower down. The National Theatre, or Národní Divadlo, was built according to the plans of two Czech architects, Professors Zitek and Schultz, within two years after the first had been destroyed by

fire in 1881. Both were erected from funds obtained by voluntary contributions given by the whole nation, and which had accumulated since 1868. The splendid foyer is artistically decorated with the paintings of Francis Zenišek to the designs of Aleš, and it contains the busts of famous Czech composers, playwrights and actors. The curtain is decorated with an allegorical picture by Vojtech Hynais.

The Stavovské Divadlo, or "Theatre of the Nobility" as it used to be, is an old theatre in the Old Town near St. Giles' Church. It was built in 1781, and is celebrated for its first-night performance of *Don Juan*. Here it was that Mozart's works were first produced, for he lived at one time in Jilská, a narrow street near by. To-day the Stavovské Divadlo stages important modern dramas as well as classical operas, both Czech and foreign.

The widest and most imposing Prague thoroughfare is Wenceslas Square, or Václavské náměsti, in the New Town. It has recently been re-paved, so that the trams pass up and down the centre instead of along the sides. For pedestrians to cross the square with safety there are long "islands" between the tramlines and the four sections for other vehicular traffic. The square, like many other streets, is undergoing many alterations. Old shops are being transformed and new buildings erected.

At the top of the square is the equestrian statue of St. Wenceslas, the Prince Wenceslas of the tenth century, and behind, crowning the inclined square, is the Bohemian National Museum, with its valuable collections of objects of historical, ethnological, botanical, zoological and geological interest. Its rooms are also the meeting-place of the Bohemian Academies.

Among the streets radiating from the Wenceslas Square is Vodičkova ulice, a shopping centre, which in the former days of bilingual street names was called *Wassergasse* by the Germans, who were under the erroneous impression

that Vodičkova was derived from Voda, the Czech for water. Actually Vodička was a person of some importance in mediæval days. Vodičkova ulice leads into Spálená ulice, which again was crudely rendered *Brenntgasse*. It leads to Charles Square, or Karlovo náměsti, with its gardens dating from the fifteenth century, when it was the centre of Charles IV's New Town, or Nové Město.

There are still many streets and houses, churches and other historic buildings in both Old and New Towns which really deserve description. Among them are the Observatory, with its collection of instruments of historical value, particularly those belonging to Tycho Brahe and Kepler. The custom of waving a flag from the tower at noon to announce the exact time is still continued. The Old-New Synagogue and the Jewish Cemetery almost alone mark the early Jewish settlement. The synagogue dates from the thirteenth century; its architecture and decorations afford an idea of the Bohemian stone-mason's art at that early date. The arches inside are supported by two enormous octagonal pillars. It almost adjoins the baroque old Jewish town hall, which is now a museum, but it functioned as a town hall in those times when the Jews were restricted to the ghetto. The interesting cemetery has been disused since 1780. It contains thousands of time-worn tombstones, often bearing some special sign to indicate the tribe to which the deceased belonged. Most of the ghetto has now been demolished, and new buildings are in course of construction where there were previously slums.

Mention must also be made of the Parliament House, or Rudolfinum, an edifice in Renaissance style designed by Zitek and Schultz, and which was previously a picture gallery. It occupies a prominent position near the Mánes Bridge. A glance should also be taken at the fruit market in Ovocný trh and Havelská ulice, where people come from early morning onwards to buy fruit, vegetables,

flowers and other daily necessities. It is a backwater from the ebb of rushing modern life, having changed but little during many decades.

Along the Vltava are the pleasant quais, or embankments, named after Rašin, Palacký, Rieger, Masaryk, Aleš and Dvořák, all of whom are venerated by the Czechoslovak people. To cross to Smichov, Malá Strana or Hradčany there are the bridges of Palacký, Legionaries, Charles, Mánes, Svatopluk Čech and Stefaník. The oldest and most remarkable of these bridges is the Charles Bridge, or Karlův Most, which is unique in having a statue upon each of the arches and buttresses. The stone structure was built by Charles IV in 1348, and a bronze statue to him, cast by Burgschmied in Nuremberg, has been placed near the tower at one end. The statues of saints and religious groups are of no special merit, and are of stone, except for the one of St. John of Nepomuk, the patron saint of Bohemia. This one is of bronze, and was cast in Nuremberg in 1683. It is said that the cost was extracted from a Jew who had reviled the cross, and it marks the spot where St. John was alleged to have been thrown into the river; and legend has it that five stars shone over his head as the body floated down the stream.

Across the Charles Bridge is the so-called Venice of Prague, made by backwaters of the Vltava. The old houses and palaces of the rest of Malá Strana are very picturesque, especially when viewed from above. The ancient arcaded houses, particularly those in Malostranské náměsti, are overlooked by the baroque Church of St. Nicholas, whose copper dome has weathered to a deep green colour. Originally founded in 1282, it was rebuilt in the eighteenth century by Dienzenhofer. Of the numerous palaces on this side of the river one of the most interesting is the Waldstein palace, erected in 1623 by Italian architects for the distinguished general Albert of

Waldstein, or Wallenstein. The large hall and apartments still contain their original furniture, and the general's horse (stuffed) and harness are also preserved. The garden with its vines growing over the loggia is also noteworthy.

Above is Hradčany with the castle, now occupied by various ministries. The unusually large Spanish and Vladislav Halls are still used for important receptions. During the Middle Ages the Vladislav Hall was used for tournaments. Its windows and portals are the earliest examples of Renaissance style in Central Europe.

Near the castle is St. Vitus' Cathedral, begun in 1344 by Matthew of Arras, and more or less completed by Peter Parler in 1385. The tombs of these two architects have recently been discovered during excavations for Roman remains. Other extensive alterations were carried out for the celebration of the thousandth anniversary of St. Wenceslas' death in 1929. In front of the altar is the royal mausoleum, with the remains of the early Bohemian kings.

Hradčany possesses two parks, and near one of them, the Chotkovy sady, is the summer villa, Belvedere, erected in Italian Renaissance style by Ferdinand I for Queen Anna (1539–1560). It is probably the finest example of its kind north of the Alps. The hall is decorated with large fresco paintings (of recent date) depicting scenes from Bohemian history. Just outside is a bronze "singing fountain", a masterpiece of the old art of metal founding executed in 1569 by Jaroš Konvař of Brno in Moravia.

The Premonstratensian monastery of Strahov in Hradčany, founded in the twelfth century, but reconstructed later by the Jesuits in baroque style, possesses an extensive library. Finally, mention must be made of the Golden Lane (Zlatá ulička), in which are the smallest houses of Prague, and where the mediæval alchemists laboured in vain search for the philosopher's stone. Their

Hradčany Castle, Prague

ovens are still put to practical use, and if you step inside and pass to the rear you will be agreeably surprised at the splendid view overlooking the royal gardens, Kralovská zahrada, the second park in Hradčany.

Brief reference must be made to two outlying parts of Prague, the Petřin Hill and the Stromovka. The Petřin may be ascended from Malá Strana through the wooded gardens. It is crowned with a prominently situated Eiffel Tower constructed to one-fifth of the dimensions of its Paris prototype. A lift conveys passengers to the top, from which an excellent view of Prague and its surroundings is obtained. On the hill is a diorama and also twelve shrines, such as are so frequently to be seen by the wayside in Central Europe.

The English park, or Stromovka, is a favourite Sunday promenade resort for all classes. For those who ride there is a "Rotten Row", but perhaps its chief attraction is the rose garden and other plantations. Besides restaurants there is a Modern Gallery and another diorama (of the Battle of Lipany in 1648). The path through Stromovka leads to Troja, just outside the city, and which is reached by crossing a pontoon bridge to the island. At Troja is the new museum of the Czechoslovak legions.

Adjoining Stromovka is the Letna, another hill, which has a large stadium for athletic displays, football and tennis matches.

Czechoslovak restaurants will be found to compare favourably with those anywhere. Lunch may be taken at noon or as late as 2.30 p.m. Work begins early in Prague, and many have finished for the day at 2 p.m. Those whose duties continue into the afternoon, a practice termed "double frequence", usually lunch at noon. Dinner may be taken at any hour after 6 p.m. It is usually early because the theatres commence at 7 or 7.30 p.m.

Whilst many of the dishes are different from ours, few

people will dislike the Czech cuisine. Most restaurants have a "Table d'hôte" or "Menu," as the set meal at fixed price is termed, as well as *à la carte* dishes. The *menu* is to be recommended because it simplifies the task of choosing the dishes. Prices vary from 8 kč. to 30 kč., and drinks are extra. Meals taken *à la carte* admit of a wider choice, but the waiters will usually substitute something else for a *menu* dish you are not keen on. Lunch and dinner are not very different, except that the latter is perhaps more substantial. Both usually begin with soup and are followed by fish, meat and sweet courses as in England. Black coffee afterwards is also the rule. The fish is usually trout or carp from the lakes or rivers. Goose and other poultry, veal, pork and ham figure largely in the Czech "Jidelni List", or Bill of Fare. Roast beef is also obtainable, but the Czechs themselves are not so partial to it as we are. Like the Germans, they are unable to cook green vegetables to our taste, but their salads are excellent, and so is their cauliflower. Accompanying the meat, and perhaps as a substitute for potatoes, is *knedliky*, a kind of dumpling made from boiled dough and breadcrumbs. Some people are very fond of them, but I eschew them, and also plums cooked in dough and served with melted butter. Stewed fruit masquerades under the title *compote*, and is very good. Mixed *compote* is sometimes served with meat like our red-currant jelly or apple sauce. The favourite sweets (*moučníky*) are turnovers, and iced cakes or dort. Black coffee is frequently served in Turkish fashion. White coffee has whipped cream (*smetana*) poured over it, and when properly made is excellent.

"What do you drink?" is the question the beer-boy will ask you as soon as you are seated. You can have Pilsener beer, or that from some other celebrated Czech brewery; it costs about 2d. or 3d. a pint. Czechoslovakia is not greatly devoted to wine-producing, and its wines

are, with one or two exceptions, raw and not to be recommended. Mělnik and Palaguay are good, and there is a palatable sweet red south Moravian wine. A kind of Tokaj from Slovakia and a red one from Ruthenia are also liked by many. Local wines cost about 5 kč. a glass. But in Czechoslovakia it is not necessary to take any of man's concoctions. The best of "Adam's Ales" are available—Mattoni water from Kysibl, and other natural spa waters from springs at Bilin, Poděbrady and Krondorf. The complete list of all sources in Czechoslovakia where the water is bottled for table use would be too long to give. The above are Bohemian waters. Piešťany and Trenčianské Teplice, in Slovakia, also have table waters of their own. These cost about 2 or 3 crowns for a pint bottle.

Almost all hotels have what is known as a kavárna or coffee-room as well as a restaurant. There are slso kavárnas unconnected with hotels. It is in the kavárna that breakfast is taken. It can be the typical Continental breakfast of coffee (or tea or chocolate), with rolls and butter, or it can be a more substantial meal, consisting of eggs or ham in addition. Scrambled eggs are nicely made in Czechoslovakia. With the coffee the waiter brings a glass of water, and after he has removed the tray at the end of the meal he will bring another tray with more glasses of water. The reason for this curious custom is not clear. Should you prefer tea to coffee, it is well to remember that Continental tea is usually very weak. Our method of obtaining it to our satisfaction is to order a pot of tea (*konvici čaje*), and then to add a spoonful of fresh leaves from a supply we take with us from home.

The kavárnas play an important rôle in Czechoslovak town life. If a man is free in the morning or afternoon, he may go there to read the daily papers, and may linger over them for hours without being disturbed to pay and depart. The kavárnas pride themselves in having a

representative stock of papers and illustrated periodicals from all European countries. Most of our leading dailies can be seen, and such weeklies as the *Sketch* and the *Graphic* will probably be brought without asking by the waiter, who has divined that you are British. For those who would read a local paper I can recommend the (German) *Prager Presse* (daily). One excellent journal in English appears weekly, viz., *The Central European Observer*, and one in French, *L'Europe Centrale*. For the Czechoslovaks who have finished their day's labour at 2 p.m. the kavárna is virtually a club; music is also frequently provided in the evenings. Some kavárnas cater for a particular clientèle, *e.g.* the medical men or the lawyers.

In the summer there are a number of open-air restaurants, for many people like to dine out of doors. For lunch, the one in the Stromovka is very agreeable, and for dinner the one half-way up the Petřin Hill (called Na Nebozízku) is a favourite, because it overlooks the city illuminated at night. Other open-air restaurants are that on Slovansky Ostrov, the island in the Vltava near the National Theatre; Na Dolejše, in Podol, where a small river fish is served like whitebait, and the Měšťanské Beseda.

Of beer gardens, or Výčep Piva, little need be said, for they resemble the German prototype. The best known of Prague is an old house in Křemencova ulice, "U Fleků". "U Kalichu", a pot-house in Na Bojiště, has been immortalised by Jaroslav Hašek in his humorous war novel *Good Soldier Švejk*. The wine-cellars, Výčep vina or Vinárna, where the old cronies gather for evening gossip over glasses of raw wine made from local grapes, are worthy of mention, although their influence and function are dwindling—as the younger generation prefers the cinemas for its chief source of diversion. The first few Prague "Kinos" were so successful that to-day it seems as if there are too many. One notices with some regret how

The National Theatre, Prague

old buildings have been demolished to make room for cinemas, banks or insurance offices. A law has been passed making it necessary to preserve the façade of all present buildings where alterations have to be made in the interior so that the appearance of the houses and the streets shall not be spoilt.

Afternoon tea is an institution only just beginning in Czechoslovakia. Weak Russian or China tea is customary, and instead of milk a thin slice of lemon or a little rum is added. Sandwiches or fancy cakes are consumed at this meal. The sandwiches are rather unlike ours. They consist of a base of bread spread with butter, and then with meat or fish or egg and caviare. There is no second slice of bread to complete the sandwich, which is consequently usually very rich. A favourite home-made cake is a large ring-shaped affair called *babovka*, not unlike Madeira. At Christmas a slightly different one with raisins, *vánočka*, is made. A kind of doughnut filled with jam is known as *buchty*. Others are filled with poppy seeds and are quite nice. Caraway seeds and coarse salt adhering to the rolls may trouble some visitors at first, as may the poor mustard which the Czechs make, but seldom use. Instead, they have *paprika*, a sweet red pepper.

Life in Prague need never be dull. Mention has already been made of the cinemas and of the Národni and Stavovské theatres, where there is always good acting and singing. In addition there are the Švandova Theatre in Smichov, Vinohrady Town Theatre and the Žpevohra Theatre, also in Vinohrady. The Germans have two theatres entirely to themselves, namely, the Neues Deutsches Theater and the Kleine Bühne. There are several other small ones like Burian's Comedy Theatre. Revues are staged at the Arena in Smichov and the Variété in Karlin. Cabaret performances are given at the

Alhambra, Sect Pavilion, Bocacio, Casanova, etc. There are also several night "bars" where programme dancing takes place after 10 p.m., but these places are more cosmopolitan than typically Czechoslovak.

Concerts and classical music may be heard in the Obecni Dům, Národní Dům (at Smichov and at Vinohrady), the Mozarteum (Jungmannova ulice), and at the Lucerna Hall.

CHAPTER IV

THE ENVIRONS OF PRAGUE

One of the pleasantest excursions that can be made from Prague is a steamer trip up the Vltava. Small steamers go as far as Malá Chuchle, and larger ones go on to Zbraslav and Stěchovice for St. John's Rapids. The departure pier is on the Palacký embankment. As the vessel steams out of Prague the Vyšehrad hill stands out prominently on the left. Legend has it that Krok in the eighth century built the castle there and so founded *Praha*, the threshold. If this legend be not accepted, then there is another which asserts that his daughter Libuša founded the city. She married Přemysl, and these were the ancestors of the Bohemian rulers until A.D. 1306.

On the other side of the Vltava is smoky Smichov. Its name is said to originate from the smile (Czech, *Smich*) a prisoner in Vyšehrad had when, as a last favour, he was permitted to mount his favourite charger and so slid down the steep slope into the river and crossed to the other side, making good his escape. Smichov, which possessed Prague's aquarium in its Kinsky Gardens, is mainly an industrial suburb, with brewery, printing works and iron foundry.

As soon as Prague is left behind, hundreds of people will be seen, during the summer months, taking sun baths or swimming in the river. The best bathing facilities are at Bránik. At Podol, on the outskirts of Prague, skiffs, canoes and sailing-yachts are for hire. The first important landing-stage after Prague is Malá Chuchle, a favourite spot for afternoon excursions. People stroll up through the woods and picnic there, or climb to the top, where there is a quaint church and graveyard with catacombs. A curious Czech custom is that lanterns are attached to many of the stones, and on certain occasions they are lighted.

As the steamer passes along, the name *Barrande* engraved in golden letters on the face of the cutting, will be noticed on the right side. It refers to the French geologist who made a study of the rich fossil remains of these remarkably striated Devonian rocks.

The next spot of interest is Zbraslav, about two hours from Prague. The steep hill overlooking the river affords an excellent view and is much favoured for picnics. There is also a profusion of wild flowers, including the balsam, salvia, yellow scabious, and several species of dianthus. The stretch of the river from Zbraslav to the St. John's Rapids has been called, rather optimistically, the "Czech Alps". Steamers go no farther than Stěchovice, as the river-bed becomes too shallow for them. By walking through the woods we come, a little higher up, to the St. John's Rapids, or Svatojanské Proudy, over which barges and rafts are steered, and experts can skilfully negotiate even canoes down to the deep water. The banks and gorges through which the small flat-bottomed barges make their way are well suited for camping. Scouts and parties of boys or youths, and even girls, frequently pitch their tents here.

Down the stream from Prague the scenery is at first not so picturesque, and there are deep locks to be passed. Nevertheless, the journey to Mělnik, at the confluence of the Vltava with the Labe (Elbe), is not devoid of interest. The Lobkovice Castle at Mělnik, surrounded by sloping vineyards, is now used for making wine. The vines were introduced from France in the time of Charles IV. Visitors are conducted through the cool cellars and are pressed hospitably to partake of the old vintages. If it is a warm day these may take effect as soon as the visitor regains the hot air, and he is well advised to be abstemious, and gently but firmly decline more than a very little of their excellent products.

Roudnice Castle near to the River Labe is also connected with the Lobkovice family. Rienzi, the "last of the Roman Tribunes", spent the year 1350 in its precincts. It contains an extensive library, including a 1462 Gutenberg Bible, a picture gallery, and an armoury. Within a short distance is Řip, the celebrated hill where "grandfather Czech" beheld the fertile land around and made it the home of his family.

Some distance from the river, on the other side, is the well-preserved fourteenth-century castle of Kokořín, admirably situated to give a splendid view of the surrounding country with its rocky scenery, amidst which are pleasant walks, especially in the direction and vicinity of Litoměřice.

Litoměřice (Leitmeritz), a comparatively small town, possesses no less than seven churches and a late Gothic Town Hall embellished with a statue of Roland. Its ancient Dům s Kalichem (Kelchhaus), so named from the tower, which is shaped like a chalice, was built by an Utraquist (Hussite) citizen in 1584. It is now an Industrial Museum. Near by are many fields of hops, for Žatec (Saaz) is not far away, and its hops (large quantities of which are exported annually) are considered to be the finest in the world.

Continuing down the Labe, or Elbe, the steamer passes the ruins of the prominent Střekov Castle, erected in 820 by Strek, and called Schrekenstein by the Germans. It was the scene of many a desperate fight in the past because it was the key to the river. The castle crowns a bold rock some 280 feet above the Labe.

The next halt is made at the river port and manufacturing town of Ustí (Aussig). Much of the North Bohemian lignite or brown coal is shipped here for Hamburg, and such disagreeable things as soap and chemicals are made at Ustí nad Labem, to give the town its full name. Now comes the prettiest part of the Labe as it winds its way out

of Bohemia into Saxony. Around Děčin (Tetschen) and Hřensko (Herrenskretchen) it passes through the rocky landscape known as Bohemian Switzerland.

Another pleasant excursion is to the old shooting-box known as Hvězda, or the Star, so called in allusion to its eight-pointed structure. It was built about 1560 in Italian Renaissance style, and well repays inspection. The train is taken (from Bruska Station in Hradčany) to Liboc. From Liboc it is a pleasant walk through the avenues of trees to Hvězda. Not far off is the White Mountain (Bilá Hora), where, in 1620, the Czechs, who had elected Frederick V (son-in-law of James I of England) as king, were defeated by Maximilian Hapsburg, and so lost their independence. The entrenchments extended to the Star Park, and the walls mark the last stand of the Protestant Bohemians.

Among the walking and riding excursions to be made from Prague, that to the romantic Šarka valley appeals particularly to the Czechs, and it can be combined with the trip to Hvězda. Šarka is a rocky stretch of countryside a few miles from the capital, where outdoor operas and Czech classical plays are performed in the summer months.

An hour by train from Smichov Station is the castle Karlův Týn, or Karlštein. It was built on a high rock in the fourteenth century by Matthew of Arras for Charles IV (1346–1378), under whom the kingdom of Bohemia rose to great prosperity. Charles intended it primarily as a stronghold for the crown jewels, for at that time Prague had no building which he considered suitable for the purpose. Its thick walls and inaccessible position indicate that it must have been almost impregnable before the days of heavy artillery, and Karlův Týn actually survived many sieges in the Hussite wars. Charles also retired to Karlův Týn to pursue his devotions and meditations undisturbed and away from the cares of State, and he made it a rule that no lady should stay there. The walls

Karlův Týn

of his chapel are studded with semi-precious stones, and the keep is a good example of the architecture of the period. The depth of the well, which is worked by a tread-wheel, may be calculated from the fact that a lighted truss of straw dropped from the top takes nine seconds before striking the water.

The entrance to the castle is on the north side, which alone is accessible, and leads to the inner and outer courtyards before giving access to the castle proper. A number of rooms are now used as a State Museum for collections of coins, literature relating to the castle, maps, furniture, etc.

Czechoslovakia is well endowed with castles, each with its long tale to tell. Křívoklát Castle, also not far from Prague, is even older than Karlův Týn, for it was restored in 1110 by Vladislav I, and Charles IV had it magnificently decorated for his French wife, Blanche de Valois. Křívoklát is of interest because it is where Rudolf II incarcerated Edward Kelley in 1595 for failing to make gold from base metal according to his claims. He and Dr. John Dee had been invited to Prague by Rudolf, and they witnessed and took part in the "projections" or transmutations of lead and other metals into gold in the alchemists' quarter of Hradčany. They were banished in May 1586 by a papal decree, and went to Krumlov and Třeboň, where Count Rosenberg assisted them. If this nobleman had hoped for any gain he must have been sadly disillusioned, for records show that his stewards disbursed as much as 200,000 gulden to Kelley, for Dee and Kelley had quarrelled, and Dee returned alone to London. Kelley went back to Prague at the request of Rudolf, but having disappointed that monarch he was thrown into prison and sent to Křívoklát. He died from injuries, or was killed on attempting to escape.

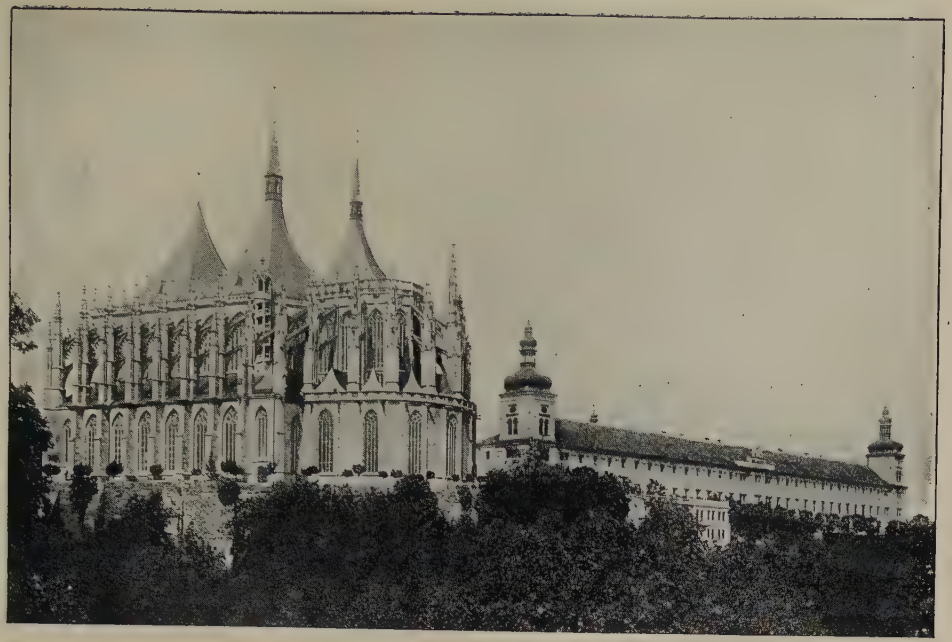
Not far from Křívoklát is Lány, the country residence of President Masaryk.

Going southward from Prague by road or rail, there is pleasantly wooded scenery, especially around Kostelec, where there are the lakes of Jevány. The first important town is Benešov, with a thirteenth-century Gothic church (St. Nicholas). About a mile away is Konopiště Castle, previously belonging to Archduke Ferdinand, who was assassinated at Serajevo in 1914, an event which precipitated the World War. In the castle grounds he had previously had a conference with Wilhelm II of Germany. The castle, surrounded by an extensive park, is now a museum, and contains the Archduke's collection of statues of St. George and the Dragon.

Kutná Hora, the Miners' Hill, an old town in decline to the east of Prague, may be seen in the course of a day by taking an early morning train from Prague. At one time it was the serious rival of the capital, for during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries its silver mines were supplying metal for currency and Wenceslas II established a mint at Kutná Hora, which also became his royal residence. Many beautiful buildings were erected at this time of prosperity. Among them are the cathedral of St. Barbara and the Vlašsky Dvůr, or Italian Court, so named from the fact that the first minters at Kutná Hora came from Italy.

The foundations of the noble Gothic cathedral were laid in 1380. The pinnacles and buttresses give it an imposing exterior, but a glimpse inside, where there is little decoration, gives the impression that it still remains unfinished. There is a grand choir with eight chapels and a nave of five aisles, in which is a carved wooden statue of a miner with his lamp in a kneeling position as if down a mine. Some of the early fresco paintings remain, including one of the coat of arms of the town, supported by a miner and a minter.

The extensive Vlašsky Dvůr was originally the mint and royal apartments, and contains several pictures,



St. Barbara, Kutná Hora

including one showing the endorsement of the royal charter of Kutná Hora by Wenceslas IV in 1409. The large stone fountain in the little square (Malé náměsti) is also noteworthy, for it dates from 1495.

With the exhaustion of the mines the town has declined, and it has never revived because it lies off the main trade routes.

Not far from Kutná Hora is the village of Sedlec, with a tobacco factory in what was originally a Cistercian abbey. But its most remarkable possession is a quaint "Church of Bones". This is an old vaulted building no longer used for divine service. An early incumbent conceived the gruesome notion of decorating the interior with human skulls and bones. The Hussite wars supplied plenty of material, as the sword-marks and bullet-holes testify. Then the wars ceased, and as more bones were required it was proclaimed that all who were buried within the precincts of the church would go directly to heaven. With this hope before them many people brought their dead relatives to Sedlec, but as soon as the bodies had rotted the bones were disinterred and added to the collection inside. There are pyramidal heaps of skulls in the body of the church, the walls are decorated with them in the form of heraldic devices, and even the chandeliers are constructed entirely of human bones.

The tendency of the Prague professional classes to have a summer villa in the country is growing, and has led to the development of many neighbouring villages. Motor-cars are becoming more and more general, and the roads are being improved to facilitate tourist traffic. The road from Prague to Zbraslav is particularly fine. Dobřichovice and other villages on the Berounka, a tributary of the Vltava, are becoming more and more used for week-ends. Other centres are Roztoky, which is nice in spring when the fruit-trees are in bloom, Časlav, Černošice, and

Dobříš. An observant traveller will notice that the roads in Czechoslovakia are lined with fruit-trees. These generally belong to the parish, and in the autumn the crops are sold to private individuals. A wisp of straw is attached to a branch to indicate that the crop has been disposed of. Another feature of the countryside is that every scrap of land is utilised and cultivated intensively. The main crops in addition to cereals and maize are sugar-beet, potatoes, flax, poppies for the seeds and oil, and vegetables.

Sedlec "Church of Bones"

CHAPTER V

THE BOHEMIAN FOREST AND SOUTH BOHEMIA

A most delightful August or September holiday can be spent in the Šumava or Bohemian Forest. It is only a few hours by train from Prague, and the country traversed is interesting too. If you go by road, and I hope you will do at least a part on foot, you will be better able to appreciate the unspoilt undulating woodlands which constitute the greater part of this corner of Bohemia, which is at its best in the late summer.

On the way are the old towns of Rokycany and Plzeň (Pilsen). Plzeň is not only the Burton of Czechoslovakia, but is also an important engineering centre, for the Škoda Works on the outskirts occupy an enormous area and are second in size only to Krupps' on the Continent. Practically every kind of machinery is made there. At the present time railway locomotives and carriages are being constructed and sent to all parts of the world.

The largest of the three breweries at Plzeň is the Citizens' Brewery, which dates from 1842, when the numerous small brewers combined together to form what has become one of the largest brewing concerns in the world. The water is obtained from a deep artesian well, and its water-tower is a prominent feature of the town. So that this water should not be used for cleansing operations there is a large plant for purifying and softening the river water which is used for rinsing out the barrels, vats, etc. The taste and special qualities of Pilsener beer are considered to be due largely to the conditions of maturing, which takes place in the enormous cellars, five miles in extent, and which have been hewn out of solid rock. The original copper vat of 1842 is preserved in the garden, although it was nearly seized for ammunition-making during the war.

In the main square (Náměstí Republiky) is the Town Hall, a sixteenth-century Renaissance building with a gallery of pictures by Czech artists. In the centre of the square is St. Bartholomew's Church, a fourteenth-century simple Gothic edifice, with a tower over 300 feet high, and a chapel added at the close of the fifteenth century. A statue (fourteenth century) of the Madonna is the most noteworthy of the church's many relics. The Salt Street (Solní ulice) leads to the Park named after Dr. Kramař, near which is the Town Theatre (Městské Divadlo), erected in 1909. Plzeň also possesses a Municipal Museum and a Franciscan monastery, beside which rises a thirteenth-century church with mural paintings dating from the fifteenth century.

Klatovy, the next town after Plzeň, is a pretty little place on the northern edge of the Bohemian Forest, and has a charming rural church, a picturesque market-place, and a good hotel, the White Rose (Bilá Růže), and restaurant. The proprietor has a friend in Italy who sends him an excellent red wine, which probably could not be purchased elsewhere outside the district where it is produced. Klatovy's decanal church of St. Mary possesses a white tower. Another tower, the Hurka, on the outskirts, with ruins of a church, affords a good view of the forest districts.

Domažlice, a small but interesting township a little to the north-west of Klatovy, was the home of the sturdy Chods, watchmen of the Bohemian frontier, and whose duty it was to ward off intruders. In mediæval times they enjoyed special privileges, and were answerable to the king alone. They had a dog's head in their emblem, symbolic of their position as watchdogs of the land.

The centre of the forest area is near Železná Ruda (Markt Eisenstein). Eisenstein itself is over the frontier in Bavaria in what is termed the Bavarian Forest. At Železná Ruda there are numerous hotels and pensions, but a far more interesting tourist centre is Špičák, the

The Black Lake (Černé Tezero) in the Bohemian Forest

village before and the highest point on the Czech railways (2,726 feet). It is higher up in the woods, and is better situated for making excursions into the primeval forest. There are no shops in Špičák, but it has two good hotels, and one of them, Rixi, contains the post and telegraph office, a feature by no means unique in Czechoslovak villages.

Two pretty lakes are situated in the forest, the Devil's Lake (Čertovo Jezero) and the Black Lake (Černé Jezero). The paths to each are clearly marked by painted signs, and at convenient intervals there are finger-posts giving directions in both Czech and German, *e.g.* Čertovo Jezero—Teufel's See, Černé Jezero—Schwarzes See. The waters of these lakes are very cold, but this does not deter many people from bathing, although boating is certainly more agreeable. Here and there along the paths clearances have been made in the forest of birch- and pine-trees, and at such spots a host of interesting wild flowers are to be seen. The undergrowth consists largely of shrubby whortleberries and cranberries, the fruit of which can be gathered, as also can the sweet wild strawberries. The country-folk, and especially their children, collect them. They use a small wooden rake-like sieve arrangement for picking the blue-black whortleberries and bright red cranberries, and will sell you a cupful for a crown.

There is not much to detain the visitor at Železná Ruda except the rather curious church with a large cupola. The weird "bagpipe players" of the Šumava may also be seen here. They are still engaged on the occasion of weddings or other festivities. From here or Špičák it is possible to stroll over into the German frontier, Bayerische Eisenstein, or to Waldhaus, a pretty hamlet among pine woods. At one time there was an enormous pine 6½ feet in circumference, and known as the Grosse Tanne, but it has been cut down.

Climbing that is good, exhilarating without being

exhausting, is to be had in the Špičák region. The Ostrý (Osser) and Javor (Arber) both require about six hours for ascent from Špičák. Guides are unnecessary as the paths are clearly indicated. At the summit of Ostrý is a Bavarian hut, where the climber may obtain refreshments, and even a substantial meal, for during the summer cattle and poultry are kept on the upper slopes of the mountain, which is 4,210 feet high. The Javor, or Arber, is rather higher (4,783 feet), and so the ascent takes a little longer, and its summit is in Germany. The hut at its summit is only intended as a refuge overnight or in bad weather. There is, however, a large restaurant half-way up and by the side of the secluded Arbersee, a charming lake used for boating and bathing.

The primeval forest remains to-day as it probably was two thousand years ago. The clearings have a rich sub-alpine flora, and entomologists, too, will find plenty to absorb their attention. The dense pine and birch woods preclude the presence of much undergrowth, but form an excellent habitat for fungi, both edible and poisonous. It is perhaps not generally known that there are many edible fungi besides our own agaric, which, indeed, is not the one most prized in Czechoslovakia. The bolete (*Boletus edulis*) is the one most sought, and it grows in profusion in many wooded districts. When collected it may be used fresh, or, as is more often the case, it is dried for winter use. It and others are frequently incorporated in soups and omelettes.

With such an abundance of wood it is natural that there should be an extensive timber trade. This centres round Sušice, where there are several large sawmills and an important match factory. Continuing southwards, on foot or by motor-car, the tourist comes to Kvilda, at the source of the Vltava, and the centre for pheasant, deer and game shooting generally. Kvilda is six miles from a railway station, and is rather cut off from the rest of the

world, but it is an ideal place for a quiet, restful holiday, especially if one elects to stay at the forester's house.

Almost as inaccessible are the woodland spa of Kunžvart (Kunschwarda), České Žleby (Böhmishe Röhren) and a few other isolated villages, the last of which is Nové Údolí (Neuthal), also on the Bavarian frontier, but not far from Austria as well. Its railway station consists of a simple wooden hut bearing its name. Inside there is a rough bench for intending passengers to await the one or two trains which pass daily. Nové Údolí is the setting-off point for the ascent of the Třístoličnik (Dreisesselberg), near which is the wooden signpost at the meeting-point of the three States, Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. The next station is Haidmuhle in Bavaria, where passport and other Customs formalities are conducted.

The district around Nové Údolí (Neuthal) is ideal for walking tours, unless it happens to rain, when this lasts usually two or three days incessantly. The by-roads are free from anything but local traffic, and they skirt the Vltava and its tributaries through wooded, undulating country, which is cool even in the height of summer. Most of the houses between village and village are a combination of inn and farm. They usually bear the bilingual inscription "Hostinec—Gasthaus". A few miles from Nové Údolí is such an inn called "U Černého Kříže" (At the Black Cross). The way-side shrine, a Black Cross, is not far off, but the only other building is the railway station. The Black Cross is, however, known to thousands of tourists who alight there for walks into the forest, especially to Želnava (Solnau) and Hořice (Horitz), which is famous for its amateur productions of Passion Plays. On Sundays and festivals in spring and summer these are performed before as many as four thousand spectators in the open-air theatre.

This part of South Bohemia belonged for centuries to the rich and powerful Rožmberk family (Counts Rosen-

berg), whose chief headquarters were at Krumlov. Later their possessions fell into the hands of the Schwarzenbergs. The name of the original owners is perpetuated by the village and castle of Rožmberk, where the large halls are decorated with rare pictures, armour, old glass, and furniture. Like most mediæval castles, it has dungeons, with harrowing tales to tell, could they speak. Another independent settlement is the neighbouring fourteenth-century monastery of Vyšší Brod, a treasure-house for the Counts. The sacristy, the oldest part, shows signs of Romanesque style.

A very good centre for exploring this part of South Bohemia is Omlenička Lázně (Klein Umlowitz), about a mile from the station of Omlenice (Gross Umlowitz). This small resort has perhaps three hundred inhabitants, and is only marked on large-scale maps. It has, however, some importance, since fast trains from Prague to Linz and Trieste stop at Omlenice, although this is more for taking in water than for setting down passengers, Omlenice being the highest point on this line. Omlenička Lázně is hardly more than a collection of cottages and farms, one of which is also an inn and restaurant, with two small shops and a bakery, a church and a school. Great Omlenice is even smaller, for it lacks the shops and church. The church, which is attached to a farm, was once a Cistercian monastery, and when the plaster is peeled off the walls of some rooms interesting sixteenth-century mural paintings are revealed.

From Omlenička it is possible to make splendid excursions into the extensive forests, to the surrounding heights and to the small towns and villages in the neighbourhood. The highest and also the nearest point is Palouska, which means *meadow*, nearly 3,000 feet high, and which is reached in about two hours. The quaint hamlet of Roiden is passed on the way, and affords a fine view towards the Austrian Alps to the south-west and to Krumlov and the

Šumava mountains (*e.g.* Klet') in the north. In the woods is an abundance of wild strawberries, raspberries, whortleberries and cranberries to refresh the traveller. They are also gathered, especially by children, and sold in the towns. There are, in addition, a number of edible fungi, but our familiar mushroom is not among them. The bolete and the yellow "fox" fungus are the most sought. They serve as an addition to soups, sauces, and omelettes, and may be dried for winter use.

The next highest point lies to the east of Omlenička, and is called Kohout, or The Cock, whilst the lower surrounding peaks are termed The Hens. The route to Kohout lies over Kaplice (Kaplitz) and the villages Blansko and Soběnov. The path is along shady walks and through the woods; the highway is only occasionally crossed after it is left at Kaplice. Few people are to be seen, and it is always a problem whether they will say "Dobrý Den" or "Grüss Gott", for some parts, *e.g.* Kaplice, are largely German-speaking, whilst others, *e.g.* Soběnov, are purely Czech. A surprising feature is that even in the German districts the names over the shops, etc., are nearly all Slav.

Kohout is reached in about three hours, and at the summit is a stone which announces in Latin that it is one of the meridional trigonometric points of Central Europe, and is used in orientation and map-making. Certainly it affords a fine view in every direction, including that to the north-east towards the Třeboň lakes, a district called the "Czech Holland".

From Kohout to Německý Benešov (Deutsch Beneschau) it is about two hours by foot, keeping to the byways and passing only Wegscheider's forestry hut before reaching this isolated town, which has daily bus services to Kaplice and to Novy Hrady (Gratzen). These are its only connections with the rest of the world. Nevertheless, this Beneschau has an imposing sloping square with

several inns, shops, a church and a brewery. The walk back to Omlenička lies over the villages Ličov (Litschau), Hradiště (Radischen), Blansko and the town of Kaplice.

The "centre" of this district is Kaplice, which lies some seven kilometres from the railway station, with which it has an omnibus connection. The large square and the streets radiating from it contain a number of shops, several hotels and cafés, the old Town Hall and two churches. As one enters the larger church of St. Peter and St. Paul a blue eye set in a triangle looks down upon the entrant. Inside are a number of interesting religious paintings. The smaller church of St. Florian dates from 1383.

Another interesting walk is to Rožmital (Rosenthal), a quaint isolated and pretty village in a wooded valley well off the beaten track. By making use of the railway from Omlenice and changing at Certlov (Zartlesdorf) on to the local railway it is possible to visit Vyšší Brod (Hohenfurth) and Rožmberk (Rosenberg). The collections at the cloister of Vyšší Brod include a number of valuable pictures, an extensive library of forty thousand volumes, early maps, geological and natural history specimens, and early scientific (physical) apparatus. The scientific section, however, is in a state of neglect.

Český Krumlov (Böhmisch Krummau), the historic seat of the Schwarzenbergs, and before them the Rožmberks, was originally founded by the Vítkovec family in 1216. The streets are so narrow that vehicles have difficulty in squeezing through the Budějovice Gate as they approach the town from the station. The castle dominates the town and is still well kept. The remains of Schwarzenberg's army is to be seen in the twenty-one old soldiers in blue uniforms inside the castle gate. They stand on guard by the useless cannon and large round stones once used in war. One ancient warrior is detailed to escort visitors through some of the three hundred rooms which, contain a mass of

Český Krumlov

treasures requiring days just to glance at. Among the ancient customs still maintained is the bugle sounding from the north, south, east and west sides of the tower at 9 a.m. For their visitors the Rožmberks built another castle, which in its new capacity as the Hotel Růže still receives Krumlov's guests.

Krumlov possesses important graphite mines, and the product is sent to Budějovice to be converted into (Kohinoor) pencils. České Budějovice is one of the most important manufacturing towns of Czechoslovakia. It has metal works, enamel-ware factories, and its beer is perhaps second only to that of Plzeň. The square adjoining the station is the scene of important markets. The old arcades are typical of Czech towns; the fountain and Town Hall both date from 1727.

On leaving Budějovice the Bohemian Forest is also left behind. The railway journey northward leads to Veselí. Actually there are two Veselís adjoining, Veselí-Mezimostí (Veselí-between-the-Bridges) and Veselí-nad-Lužnici (Veselí-on-Lužnice). It is a small railway junction for two lines to the south-east. One of these goes to Vienna, whilst the other connects with Jindřichův Hradec (Henry's Chateau), exactly 15 degrees east of Greenwich; time is thus exactly one hour in advance, and there is a meridian line on the pavement to indicate this. Like Krumlov, it was founded by the Vítkovecs, but passed on to the Rožmberks. The present castle dates from 1773, when it was restored after partial destruction by fire. The town is situated on Lake Vajgar. This and the extensive ponds at Třeboň (also belonging to Rožmberk) are drained at certain seasons for the fish (chiefly carp), for this is a centre of pisciculture.

By a narrow-gauge railway from Jindřichův Hradec the small town of Nová Bystřice (Neu-Bistritz) on the Austrian frontier is reached. It possesses a typical square with fountain, and although having small factories it is

unspoilt, for very few tourists trouble to visit Nová Bystřice or its neighbouring villages. There is a charming little lake for fishing, boating and bathing, and woods for pleasant walking excursions.

After Veselí, in the direction of Prague, the next important station is Tábor, a name which means camp, and from which it was derived because it was the site of Žižka's camp. Žižka was the Hussite general who led the followers of the Catholic reformer, John Hus, in their battles with the forces of the Orthodox troops sent to crush them into submission. Žižka invented an armoured waggon which might be considered a forerunner of the modern tank. An example is to be seen in Tábor Museum.

On three sides Tábor is surrounded by water. Two are made by a bend in the River Lužnice, and the third is by the Jordan lake, so called because its waters were used for baptisms like those of the holy river. When Tábor was originally founded the inhabitants attempted to follow a strictly religious life according to the teaching of Christ. They studied with fervour and acquired a deep knowledge, and the town prospered in spite of many set-backs, especially during the enforced re-catholisation under the Hapsburgs in the seventeenth century. The town is rich in Hussite relics, and Žižka's statue stands in the square of his name. There is also a large monument to him at Sudoměř.

From Tábor there runs a little electric railway to Bechyně, with its hills and woods overlooking the River Lužnice, in which people bathe and row. The boats for hire are, however, hardly conducive of comfort, for they are made out of rough unplaned wood, and the fixed oars are only planks trimmed to taper gradually to the handle.

Bechyně is famous locally for its mud and peat baths, which reduce corpulence and allay rheumatism. It is rather off the beaten track, and therefore almost unknown outside Czechoslovakia, and is even by no means well

known to the Czechs themselves. It received a royal charter as early as the thirteenth century, and has a well-situated castle. Another small watering-place, Lázně Libušiny (The Spa of Libuša), has ferruginous springs, but is more noteworthy for its long bridge, a concrete structure nearly 700 feet in length, which spans the Lužnice 160 feet below.

Other castles in South Bohemia include those of Hluboká, Orlík, Zvíkov and Písek. Hluboká, on a small hill in a spacious park, is said to have been built after the style of Windsor Castle, which it certainly resembles at a distance.

Orlík, built on a steep rock overlooking the Vltava and surrounded on the other side by a beautiful park, is not easily approached except by motor-car, as it is some miles from the nearest railway station, and the uphill walk to the castle is fatiguing. It is usually approached from Písek, an ancient township on the River Otava, a tributary of the Vltava. At the rear of the baroque Town Hall of Písek are the ruins of its royal castle. The Písek district, it may be noted, possesses the most extensive forests in Bohemia. The ruins of Zvíkov Castle stand on a high rock at the confluence of the Rivers Vltava and Otava. The castle dates from the thirteenth century, but the Markoman tower is probably still older, as its name suggests. Across the arcaded courtyard (with frescoed walls) are the curiously slanting steps to the upper rooms (Nuptial Hall, Dining-room, Crown Hall and Chapel), which are still arranged as in mediæval times. The remarkable mural paintings have unfortunately been partly defaced by careless visitors.

It may be noted in passing that the oldest road in Czechoslovakia is that one which links České Budějovice with Linz in Upper Austria. The modern highway and also the railway still follow the old original road fairly closely, and even coincide with it over certain stretches.

The route has been known to serve as a line of communication between the south of Europe and the central and northern parts as far back as history goes, and it is probable that the track was in existence even in prehistoric times. The Marcomanni, the Romans, Avars, German and Frank invaders and others made use of this road before it came to be the route for the salt traffic from Salzkammergut, and served also for the missions to and from Rome and other Italian seats of learning. Along the track of the road are many inns, and it is noticeable how old a number of the existing small hostelries in South Bohemia are. Not only were there these inns, but in secluded parts there were also robbers' castles (the ruins of Loužek not far from Omlenice are an example), for travellers were often subjected to molestation up to fairly recent times.

An early "Iron Way" was constructed between České Budějovice and Linz over a hundred years ago, but the trains, or rather coaches, were drawn by horses. Later this line became the first railway in Central Europe, and although in modern times a slightly different path is followed (as also in the case of the highroad), it is possible to observe, here and there, the old embankment and even the original bridges. Nevertheless, except where these now coincide with the highroad, they have fallen into disrepair and lie in fields and pasture land. Good examples of these bridges may be observed on the left-hand side of the railway between Kamenný Újezd and Holkov-Římov. They are to be seen sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other from the train when travelling between Budějovice and Horní Dvořiště.

A General View of Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary)

CHAPTER VI

BOHEMIAN SPAS AND THERMAL RESORTS

There are no less than two hundred thermal spas and health resorts within the boundaries of Czechoslovakia. A number of these, with Karlsbad as the centre, are situated in North-west Bohemia below the Ore Mountains (Krušné Hory).

Karlsbad, or Karlovy Vary, to give it the Czech name, at the confluence of the Ohře and Teplá, receives about seventy thousand visitors annually, who are either attracted by its charming natural surroundings and general advantages as a holiday resort, or who go to be cured of their liver and other complaints by drinking the hot spring waters which emerge from the ground in a score of places at a temperature of 163° F.

This health-giving natural spa water contains the sulphate, chloride, and bicarbonate of sodium, and the bicarbonates of calcium and magnesium, and a little radium emanation and other radio-active constituents. The water is also charged with much free carbon dioxide gas. The calcium and magnesium compounds are medicinally unessential, and indeed these elements are largely deposited as their carbonates around the orifices where the waters gush forth. When objects of wood, china, or even leaves and flowers are placed near the springs, or immersed in the waters for some hours, they become firmly coated with hard incrustations of these carbonates, often in curious shapes. Altogether there are nearly twenty hot springs and two cold ones. The greatest is the Sprudel (Czech, Vřídlo), where the water spouts up to a height of a hundred feet, and from 5 a.m. onwards thousands of people may be seen at the springs with cups and glasses drinking the hot, bitter and steaming water, usually with the help of a glass tube. Since the Sprudel,

or Vřídlo, yields about 33 cubic feet of water every minute, much must be lost. Now pipes have been laid to divert some of the water and accompanying gas to an extraction plant, where the Sprudel salts are isolated by partial evaporation under reduced pressure, and finally, after removing the unessential calcium and magnesium constituents, by pouring the concentrated liquor over hot rotating drums. The gas evolved during this process consists of about 98 per cent. carbon dioxide, and the bulk of the remaining 2 per cent. is radium emanation and other "inert" gases. The salts are allowed to stand in an atmosphere of this gas for some time to re-absorb as much of it as possible. In this way it is possible to prepare 30,000 lb. of salts daily. In the light of modern knowledge it would appear that the efficacy of the salts and the waters is partly, if not wholly, due to the trace of radium present. (It has been shown that a litre of the Sprudel waters contains 50 billionths of a gram of radium.) This need occasion no surprise when it is recalled that the Jáchymov (St. Joachimsthal) radium mines are not far from Karlsbad, and it is noteworthy that most of the natural spring waters of Czechoslovakia's northern watershed show a marked radio-activity.

The main thoroughfare of Karlsbad, or Karlovy Vary, follows the course of the River Teplá (Tepl). The most fashionable shops, cafés, restaurants and hotels are situated along the Muhlbrunn (Mlýnská) Kolonade, continuing in the Alte Wiese (Stará Louka) and Neue Wiese (Nová Louka). Of the many walks, some are along level ground, *e.g.* by the Goethe Wiese, whilst others mount one of the many neighbouring hills, *e.g.* Dreikreuzberg (U tří Křížků), and afford fine views of the surrounding country. Among the pleasant walks to be made that to Pirkenhammer is well worth while, and can be combined with a visit to the porcelain factory, where many high quality ceramics are hand-worked and hand-painted.

The Sprudel, Karlsbad

Mention should be made of the fact that the name Karlovy Vary (and thus also Karlsbad) is derived from the discovery of the healing powers of the waters by Charles IV in 1347 while he was hunting. It is said that the Romans knew of the value of the waters still earlier, but the town was first developed during the reign of Charles IV, and by the sixteenth century had already acquired an international reputation as a spa, and since that time it has had a continually increasing number of visitors annually. They form a very cosmopolitan assembly of statesmen, successful financiers, and business men, and others from all nations, many of whom have neglected their health in their struggles after success in life. Perhaps the most picturesque are the Galician Jews, unmistakable by their long black gabardines.

It is worth while, when at Karlsbad, to make an excursion to Kysibl (Giesshübel), where the sparkling alkaline mineral water "Mattoni" is bottled for export to all parts of the world. Similar waters are bottled at Krondorf in the Karlsbad district and at Bilina, near Podmokly, at Poděbrady and elsewhere. The road from Karlsbad to Kysibl lies along the River Ohře. To the left is Jáchymov (St. Joachimsthal), high up in the Ore Mountains, a town of very chequered history. Early mining operations began in the fifteenth century, and were developed especially by Count Joachim Schlik, who realised the value of the silver deposits, and attracted colonies of miners from Bohemia and Saxony to exploit the mines as fully as possible. His Christian name was given to the valley, which thus became known as Joachimsthal, and the coins as Joachimsthalers, which name was ultimately abbreviated to "thalers", and these were much sought as they were known to be of good silver. The name survives as the American "dollar". The mines became famous throughout Europe, and even attracted Agricola, who spent six years in Jáchymov (1527–1533), and used

the information so gained in compiling his monumental *De Re Metallica*. Gradually the silver became exhausted and mining practically ceased, producing only small quantities of cobalt ores used in making colours. In 1912 the uranium mineral previously considered as worthless was found by Professor and Madame Curie to contain a relatively high content of radium. This waste mineral, known as pitchblende, has proved to be the richest source of radium in the world, and the mines are again flourishing, for Czechoslovakia is supplying the bulk of the radium salts and similar products needed in hospitals and elsewhere.

There are numerous springs near the town, and these are used in the curative bathing establishments that have been opened since the discovery of the radium deposits. Radio-active mud-bath treatment is also given in the hydropathic institutes at Jáchymov.

Higher up in the mountains is the highest town in Bohemia, Boží Dar (Gottesgab), 3,373 feet above sea-level, on the crest of the Krušné Hory (Erzgebirge), and at the frontier with Saxony (Germany). An hour by foot takes the traveller to Klínovec (Keilberg), still higher up (4,083 feet). This is the highest point in the Krušné Hory, and a look-out tower has been built at the summit, affording a good view into Saxony as well as over Bohemia.

Loket (Elbogen), another small but interesting resort, derives its name from the sudden bend in the River Ohře (Eger) round the rocky eminence on which the town has been built. The chain bridge over the river is one of the oldest of its kind. The castle, which is well preserved and is now a museum, was at one time a prison. It originated from one built in 870.

The watering-place Františkovy Lázně (Franzensbad), with its numerous parks, possesses ten mineral springs (chalybeate and saline), which are used for drinking-cures

Loket (Elbogen)

and for bathing. The saline springs evolve the strongest known natural solution of Glauber's salt (36 grams per litre). The iron minerals in the neighbourhood give rise, on weathering, to the soluble sulphate which is found in the local peat deposits.

Although not a health resort, Cheb (Eger) may conveniently be described here, as it is only four miles from Františkovy Lázně. This ancient frontier town existed in the eleventh century, and the square (Hlavní náměsti, Ring) contains many old houses, notably on the north side. In the old Městský Dům (Stadthaus) Albert of Wallenstein (or Waldstein) was murdered in 1634 by Devereux, an Irishman. The house is now a museum, and contains mementoes of the general, his sword, writing-table, etc., and a doubtful picture depicting the "execution of the General of Friedland". The so-called portrait of Waldstein also differs from others which are considered authentic. Cheb also possesses a castle erected in 1180 by Frederick Barbarossa. It is now in ruins, but at one time was visited by kings and emperors. The Church of St. Nicholas (Sv. Mikuláše) was built in the Pointed style in 1111, with nave and aisles of equal height, and borne by eight pillars.

An interesting point concerning the railways at Cheb is that they belong to the German State. This applies also to the local lines through the north-west corner of Bohemia just north of Cheb. They are owned and maintained by the German State, although on Czechoslovak territory. This anomaly is, however, not unique in Central Europe. The Czech railways extend into Bavaria at Furth im Walde. Again, they run over Prussian territory at Ziegenhals in Silesia, and in the south-east Czechoslovak trains have to travel over twenty miles of Rumanian territory between Terešva and Trebušany, two towns in Ruthenia, or Sub-Carpathian Russia.

Marianské Lázně (Marienbad), the second most

popular health resort in Czechoslovakia, is on the main line fiom Cheb to Prague. It has not the history of Karlsbad, but the springs yield waters of similar composition and equal efficacy, with the only difference that they are cold. In the Rudolfův pramen (Rudolfsquelle) so much carbon dioxide gas is evolved that a lighted candle is extinguished 3 feet above the level of the water and soap bubbles will float on the gas at this level.

Like Karlovy Vary, Marianské Lázně possesses pleasant avenues, spacious parks and numerous first-class hotels and restaurants. The surrounding pine woods afford opportunities for long and short walking excursions; the paths are indicated by frequent signposts. One occupying about two hours is to Lázně Kynšvart (Königswart), and is accomplished from the Lesní pramen (Waldquelle) across the Karolinína výšina (Karolinahohe). Kynšvart is renowned for its delicious mineral water Richardká (Richardsquelle). There is also the Metternich Castle (seventeenth century), which contains an altar from the Church of San Paulo, the gift of Pope Gregory XVI.

Nearer to Prague is the twin resort Teplice-Šanov (Teplitz-Schönau), between the Krušné Hory and the Středohoří, or Middle Mountains. The word Teplice is Slavonic for "hot springs", and those of Teplice-Šanov have a temperature of 97–125° F., although they are almost free from dissolved mineral matter. Their curative powers have been known for centuries, and it is claimed that they were known to the Romans in A.D. 762. They are specially prescribed for gout and stiffness of the joints. As at the other resorts, the "cures" are aided by pleasant surroundings, and there is a Park or Kurgarten at Teplice.

This by no means exhausts the spas of Bohemia, for, in addition to the above and better-known resorts, there are many others which are gradually becoming known to the

Marienbad (Marianské Lázně)

Poděbrady

travelling public. Among them mention must be made of Poděbrady.

Lázně Poděbrady, about thirty miles east of Prague, is a very old town, but a new spa, for the curative powers of its waters were not realised until 1905. Its castle is referred to as early as the twelfth century. King George of Poděbrady (1458–1471) was born there, and an equestrian monument to him adorns the square named after him.

The castle has been adapted to a restaurant and pension. Across the Labe is the Park, Obora, where there is a small bathing station. The waters, some of which are bottled as Poděbradka, are ferruginous, but contain lithia and other alkali bicarbonates in small quantities, and are highly radio-active.

CHAPTER VII

THE BOHEMIAN PARADISE AND GIANT'S MOUNTAINS

The charming country around Turnov is known as the Český Ráj, or Bohemian Paradise, whilst farther on is the range of mountains dividing Czechoslovakia from Germany, and known as the Giant's Mountains. The journey thither from Prague takes the traveller through a number of interesting places. The River Labe, or Elbe, is touched at Brandýs, once the headquarters of the Bohemian Brethren, and on the opposite bank is Stará Boleslav, of still greater historic interest. The Church of St. Václav (Wenceslas), it is supposed, was the scene of the murder of Prince Wenceslas ("Good King Wenceslas") by his brother Boleslav at the door of the old chapel in 929. Adjoining is the Romanesque St. Clement's Church, with frescoes said to date from the eleventh century.

Near these towns is Houstka, a small watering-place with ferruginous and carbonic springs, and a little farther on is Lýsa, with a château rising above the town. Milovice, which may be regarded as the Czechoslovak Aldershot, as it is an army camping-ground amid pleasant surroundings, is near by.

Mladá Boleslav, which means Young Boleslav, although the town dates from the tenth century, but it was almost destroyed during the Hussite wars, nevertheless is now a thriving manufacturing town, where motor-cars and engineering machinery are made at what was formerly the works of Lauren and Klement, but which are now merged in with the great Škoda works of Plzeň. Lauren and Klement were pioneers in the manufacture of bicycles, which are still made at Mladá Boleslav, so the town may be described as the Coventry of Czechoslovakia. It is situated on a spur of the sandstone rocks above the River

Sandstone Rocks in the Bohemian Paradise

Jizera (Iser), and the castles of Kost and Bezděz are in the neighbourhood. The latter has an interesting history, for Wenceslas II was imprisoned within it in 1279. It was burnt by Hussite soldiers in 1421, and after restoration it passed through many vicissitudes before first becoming an Augustine and then a Benedictine monastery. After the dissolution of the Order in 1785 it fell into ruins.

The centre of the Bohemian Paradise is Turnov, a town of about six thousand inhabitants, where the Czech garnets (the national stones) are cut and made into jewellery, for garnet brooches and pins are thought much of in Czechoslovakia. There are two churches of architectural interest, namely those of St. Nicholas and St. Francis. There is also the old Town Hall, dating from the early part of the seventeenth century.

Around Turnov there are sandstone rocks picturesquely cleft by weathering, and upon several of which castles have been built. Among these mention may be made of the ruins of the thirteenth-century Waldstein Castle, once belonging to the Duke of Friedland, the Hrubá Skála, with its rock dungeons, and Trosky, the most picturesque of them all, for the twin ruins are built upon two high rocks, basaltic peaks linked together with a great wall and affording an extensive view almost to Prague.

The country from Turnov to Semily and Jičín is rich in sandstone rocks of grotesque shapes. The most extensive are the Prachovské Skály, several square miles in area, where deep gorges and isolated rocks alternate with woodland.

To the north of the Bohemian Paradise are two important towns, Jablonec and Liberec (Reichenberg). The former produces much glassware and cheap imitation jewellery, whilst Liberec, one of Czechoslovakia's largest provincial towns, is the centre of Bohemian textile industry, and the centre of an annual international textile

fair. From Liberec excursions are often made to the Ještěd Hills (Jeschkengebirge).

The Krkonoše (Riesengebirge), or Giant's Mountains, extend almost from Děčín (Tetschen) on the Labe to Silesia. Their highest point is Sněžka (Schneekoppe), about 5,300 feet above the sea-level, and at the summit of which is a meteorological observatory. The popularity of the Krkonoše is largely due to their accessibility and the abundance of good hotels. The so-called mountain "huts", *e.g.* Petrova Bouda (Peterbaude), Osecka Bouda (Wossecka Baude), etc., are really splendid hotels, with modern conveniences and excellent food, and which could hardly fail to please persons with the most fastidious tastes.

The principal starting-point for the Giant's Mountains is Vrchlabí (Hohenelbe), not far from the source of the Labe (Elbe). From Vrchlabí in summer there is an omnibus service to Spindlerův Mlýn (Spindlermuhle). In winter the connection must be made in a sleigh. Most of the interesting spots, *e.g.* Sněžka, Velký and Vysoký Šišák (Hohes Rad), Dívčí Kameny (Mädelstein), Poledni Kamen (Mittelstein) and the trip over into Germany at Hirschberg can all be conveniently made from Špindlerův Mlýn.

Another centre for these and other excursions is the spa, Janské Lázně (Johannisbad), which is much frequented in summer on account of its warm springs (84° F.), which are beneficial in cases of anæmia and nervous complaints. A little below is Trutnov (Trautenau), the scene of a lengthy battle in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, commemorated by monumental stones. A short train journey from Trutnov brings the traveller to Dolní Adršpach (Nieder Adersbach), where there are more interesting rock formations resembling those around Turnov.

Janské Lázně

CHAPTER VIII

EAST BOHEMIA

Although not much frequented by tourists, East Bohemia has many interesting historical associations, and also possesses a charm of its own. Its soil is not so productive as in other parts, and most of the inhabitants are small peasant farmers who in past ages have not been so disturbed by war and other turmoils.

South-east of Prague is the valley of the Sázava, a tributary of the Vltava, and it drains a large part of East Bohemia. It is noteworthy for its pleasant scenery and the abandoned silver mines, for in mediæval times the villages near the Sázava produced much of this metal, which was sent to be minted at Kutná Hora. To-day the small town of Sázava has two glassworks, which produce much of the "Bohemian" glassware. The furnaces are still partly fired by wood, which is very plentiful.

Much of the agricultural land here is laid down for beet cultivation, and the roots are extracted and the raw sugar refined at the numerous factories scattered over East Bohemia, such as those at Dobrovice and Cerekvice. Scientifically controlled seed selection is made at the testing station of Semčice, and has enabled the farmers to grow beets containing a fifth of their weight of pure sugar. The exhausted fibre and pulp is used either as cattle food or as manure, since it is rich in potassium salts. For home consumption and export to France and Germany the sugar is cast into the rectangular parallelopiped shapes favoured on the Continent. For us the Czechs go to the extra trouble of casting it into cubes, in which the individual crystal grains are also larger. The molasses are fermented and made into spirits, especially at Nymburk. In Slovakia a spirit known as *slivovice* is made by fermenting very sweet plums and then distilling the product, and

another strong spirit, *borovička*, is flavoured with pine seeds.

Perhaps the chief fruit in Czechoslovakia is plums, most of which are made into a popular jam, or marmalade, which is so firm that it resembles cheese and is cut with a knife. At Molitorov, plums and other fruit are preserved (crystallised) by immersion in sugar solutions of increasing strength. The so-called "Carlsbad Plums" are made in this way.

At Kolín, an old town on the upper Labe, besides sugar refineries, there are more fruit-preserving factories, and others where pharmaceutical and medicinal preparations are made. Pardubice, the next important station on the line east of Prague, has similar industries. In the old part of the town are several buildings of architectural interest, *e.g.* Pernštejn Zámek (castle), a Decanal church (1226) and the remains of the ramparts and Zelená brána (Greengate) of 1537.

Continuing east, we come to Choceň, a railway junction, which enables us to change on to a branch line to Vysoké Mýto and Litomyšl, two old towns quite off the beaten track. Vysoké Mýto possesses an old-fashioned square and twelfth-century Gothic St. Lawrence Church, containing a large picture by Peter Brandl. The Town Hall (1431), the gates and three towers of the ramparts are well preserved. Not far away are the castle ruins of Kožumberk.

Litomyšl is one of the oldest and at the same time most typical of Czech towns. In the early days its tenth-century castle (983) protected the route from Bohemia to Moravia, and it was the spot chosen for a Benedictine monastery at the end of the eleventh century. The town received its charter in the thirteenth century, and was made a bishopric in 1344. Its printing-works date from 1503, and it was the refuge of the persecuted Protestant Bohemian Brethren, who suffered so much in the seventeenth century and were obliged to leave their country, taking their farewell at the still preserved paddock, Růžový Palouček, where there is a monument erected to their memory,

A mediæval medical man of repute, John Černý (1480–1530), was a native of Litomyšl. He did much to advance the healing art with his plant remedies. He was also acquainted with many metallic compounds of use in medicine, and his treatise on Plants went through many editions in Nuremberg, Prague and elsewhere.

Litomyšl is also the birthplace (in 1825) of Bedřich Smetana, the famous Czech composer, and there is a statue to him in the fine old arcaded square, many of the houses of which are decorated with wonderful sgraffito or mural paintings. There are still others in the remarkable Renaissance castle erected on the site of an old citadel and rotunda erected in the sixteenth century by the Italian architect, Giovanni Battista, for Vratislav of Pernstein. One wall of the palace is elaborately decorated with these sgraffito paintings of still more scenes from the Bible and ancient legends. The almost unknown and neglected museum contains a most valuable collection of early books and manuscripts, as well as many objects of local ethnographical interest, and also a collection of national costumes.

There are many peasant industries carried on in the winter months in East Bohemia, around the Czech-Moravian Highlands (Česko-Moravska Vrchovina), and among them is the hand-weaving of imitation Persian carpets. This centres around Hlinsko, where there are also carpet-making factories.

Two more towns are worthy of mention, Hradec Kralové and Králův Dvůr. Both are ancient towns; the former was the scene of an important battle where the Austrians were defeated by the Prussians in 1866. The latter is where an old Czech manuscript was unearthed in 1817, and as it contained fragments of old Czech songs it was at one time regarded as the oldest Czech document extant. President Masaryk was among those who before the war expressed doubt as to its genuineness.

CHAPTER IX

MORAVIA AND SILESIA

The capital of Moravia is the university town of Brno (Brünn), which has about a quarter of a million inhabitants, and is centrally situated in Czechoslovakia, being about four hours by fast train east of Prague. Its textile trade has earned for it the title of "Czechoslovak Manchester", but its importance extends beyond that given it by industry, and it is fast losing the appearance of a manufacturing town.

The town is dominated by the Špilberk Hill and Castle. This castle was once a fortress and withstood many sieges in the Thirty Years' War and afterwards. From 1740 to 1855 it served as an Austrian State prison for political offenders, chiefly Italians. Many of these prisoners were kept in the underground casemates or dungeons, and were often subjected to great cruelty, as the instruments of torture, which are still preserved, bear witness. Count Trenck, colonel of the Pandours, among others, died here, and the horrors of confinement in the Špilberk have been related by the poet Silvio Pellico in his widely translated book, *My Prisons*. In 1855 the citadel was converted into a barracks, but reverted to a prison during the World War. In 1925 a memorial stone was erected to the Italian Carbonari who died in the prison.

Upon a smaller elevation is St. Peter's Cathedral, with two fine slender spires, which have been termed the "toothpicks". There are a number of fine old baroque houses around the Vegetable Market (Zelený trh), which also contains an imposing fountain, "Parnas", and columns in honour of the Virgin Mary, built in 1696 by Fischer of Erlach. The County (Zemské) Museum, once a bishop's seat, contains among other things a unique collection of cave-bears' skeletons; and the City Hall,

Brno

with the 1608 "Dragon of Brno" and 1638 "Wheel of Brno", has a Gothic portal (1671) by Pilgram. Brno's theatre was the first to be illuminated with electric light in 1882.

Brno, being in the centre of Moravia, is well suited for excursions in this province. There are many small villages near by where the national dresses are regularly worn, *e.g.* around Lanžhot and at Kyjov and Velká, on the way to Vlara and Slovakia. Each village has its distinctive costumes, differing in some detail from those of its neighbours. Those interested in archæology can make one-day trips to see the wonderful palæontological discoveries at Předmostí, near Přerov, to the north, or at Vistonice to the south.

The Moravian Karst is a belt of land about fifteen miles long and five miles wide to the north of Brno. It is composed of Devonian limestone. Of the numerous hollows, valleys and caves, the Macocha Abyss and stalactite and stalagmite caverns and the underground River Punkva are of particular interest.

These are best visited from Blansko, about an hour by train from Brno (on the Prague-Brno main line). From Blansko there are conveyances to the caves. Perhaps the most impressive part is the Masaryk dome, like a large hall about 60 feet high, 300 feet long, by 130 feet across at the widest point. Part of this underground journey is made by boat. The most remarkable portion of the stalactites are the curtain formations of very slender pencil-like rods which have been formed by the dripping of calcareous water through many ages. They form a strange contrast with the massive stalagmite pillars in the other caves.

The peace memorial at Slavkov (Austerlitz) was erected to the memory of those who fell in the battle when Napoleon defeated the combined Austrian and Russian troops in 1805. The Kaunitz Castle at Slavkov has a fine picture gallery.

From Brno it is possible to visit Luhačovice, the best known of Moravian health resorts, nestling in the Olšava valley among the wooded foothills of the West Carpathians. The Luhačovice springs contain the bicarbonates, chlorates, iodides and bromides of iron, lithium and sodium, and the spa possesses an important inhalatorium, as well as hydropathic establishments for curing catarrhs, asthma, etc. Most of its visitors, however, are those who go there for a quiet rest.

Uherské Hradiště and Uherské Brod are two ancient towns in the south-east of Moravia, where the people still retain their beautiful national costumes. These towns were probably the centres of the old Great Moravian Empire. Uherské Brod was the birthplace of Comenius (Jan Amos Komenský), the great Slovak pedagogue who was so much in advance of his times. His best-known works, which are still read by educationalists to-day, are *The World in Pictures* and *The Labyrinth of the World.*

Harking back to North Moravia, we must pass Olomouc, famous for its cheese, the centre of North Moravian trade. Among the objects of special interest is St. Wenceslas' Cathedral on the site of the old castle, of which the Romanesque windows and basilica remain. There is a Natural Science Museum and a thirteenth-century St. Michael's Church. The Town Hall has an old clock (?1422) and a noteworthy Renaissance portal. In the square (Masarykovo náměsti) is the theatre and a 1715 fountain, with a statue to Julius Cæsar.

From Olomouc excursions can be made to the Beskids, of which Radhost (3,600 feet) is the favourite tourist centre.

Still farther north is the "Black Country" of Czechoslovakia, in the north-east of Moravia and central part of Czech Silesia, around Moravská Ostrava. From the train there is little to see but coal shafts and iron foundries. Nevertheless, Czech Silesia includes a number of resorts and places worthy of the tourist's attention.

The Silesian Ironworks at Vitkovice

The capital of Czech Silesia (most has gone to Poland, and the bulk of the remainder is in Germany) is Opava (Troppau), on the river of the same name. It has many old houses and shops with quaint names dating back to mediæval times. One instance is the chemist's shop bearing the bilingual sign "Lekárna u Bíleho Anděla —Apotheke zum Weissen Engel" (At the White Angel). This establishment is adorned by an angel and a sign to show it was there in 1550. In the upper square rises the Městské věz (Stadtturm), 240 feet high, erected in 1615. Facing it is the theatre, behind which is the cathedral (Maria Himmelfahrt). St. George's Church on the lower square has a fine façade and two seventeenth-century towers. The Industrial Art Museum, erected in Renaissance style in 1895, faces the well-laid-out park containing a statue to Schiller and another to Jahn, the German gymnastic instructor. Of Silesia's other towns the largest is Krnov (Jägerndorf), the centre of the woollen trade, and where musical instruments are made. Being right on the frontier, it does much trade with Germany.

The tourist centre in Czech Silesia is Frývaldov (Freiwaldau), a small resort from which it is possible to make many interesting excursions and walking tours. An hour away is Lázně Gräfenberk (Gräfenberg), a spa founded in 1826 by Dr. Priessnitz, who discovered the curative value of its very cold springs (40° F.), which he prescribed for bathing as well as drinking. There is a statue erected to him on the promenade. Other memorials to his success are to be seen in Gräfenberg.

A walk through the forests of the Jeseník (Gesenke) hills brings one to a number of springs, often marked like the one discovered in 1892 by Dr. Emmel. Below is Dolní Lípova (Nieder Lindewiese), a small curative spa noted for its drastic dietetic and peat-bath treatment of obesity and internal troubles. Cukmantl (Zuckmantel) is another

small spa where a Dr. Schweinburg's treatment for nervous troubles is given.

Lázně Karlova Studánka (Karlsbrunn) is reminiscent of Marienbad in its situation, and is convenient for ascent of Praděd (Altvater), about 4,600 feet high, the highest point in the Jesenik hills.

Bohumín (Oderberg) on the Odra possesses the largest railway station in Czechoslovakia. This is due to its many connections; one international line goes to Germany and another to Poland. It is also the end station of two Czech lines, one from Prague and the other to Košice. The Bohumín-Košice line, which is still only a single track in places owing to its proximity to the Carpathian Mountains, is a vital east to west main line, and since the war has assumed great importance, whilst formerly it was merely a subsidiary branch line. For some distance around Těšín (Tetschen) it forms the frontier between Poland and Czechoslovakia, and at Těšín itself the town is Polish, whilst the railway station is Czechoslovak.

On the way from Bohumín to Těšín is Dárkov, a small spa possessing the strongest European iodide springs, which are being used for combating arterio-sclerosis. The mud is said to contain free iodine. After the Jablunka Pass is traversed by the railway along a single track, Slovakia is entered.

Bratislava from across the Danube

CHAPTER X

BRATISLAVA AND SOUTHERN SLOVAKIA

Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia and the seat of the autonomous ministry for the eastern part of the republic, was a Roman stronghold at the time of Marcus Aurelius, and was known as Posonium. Its castle dates from the time of King Břetislav (1037–1055), whose kingdom included Moravia and part of Slovakia, as well as Bohemia. When the town belonged to Hungary it was renamed Poszony, but as most of its inhabitants in mediæval times were Germans (they still form about a quarter of the population to-day), the town became better known as Pressburg. After the war, when its incorporation in Czechoslovakia as the capital of Slovakia occurred, the people called it again by its old name, which is now the official one. Although it is the largest Slovak town and has a population of over 100,000, it is hardly typical of Slovakia, for, standing at the junction of three States, it is very cosmopolitan in character. Vienna is but a tram-ride away, whilst Hungary adjoins on the opposite bank of the Danube. There are still some thousands of Hungarian inhabitants, and, indeed, at one time Bratislava was the capital of Hungary, after the capture of Budapest by the Turks in 1541, and Hungarian kings were crowned here. To-day all three languages may be heard in the streets. Notices and signs and place-names are trilingual, and there are Slovak, German and Hungarian newspapers printed in the town.

Since 1918 Bratislava has had its University established, and named after Jan Amos Komenský (or Comenius), the great mediæval Slovak educationalist. One of the Professors is Dr. Kolisek, whose house is like a private museum of examples of Slovak peasant art, especially embroidery and costumes, which he has arranged in order for each

district. He has also a good collection of paintings by the best Slovak artists, including several of himself by Josef Uprka and J. Ondrušek. Being a keen musician, Dr. Kolisek has a number of Slovak instruments, which he delights in playing to his guests.

The most prominent feature of Bratislava is its castle, now partly in ruins, whilst the rest is used as a barracks. From the ruins it overlooks the Danube, and both Austria and Hungary are plainly visible. A ferry steamer takes passengers across the river to the park, Petrzalka, for a few square miles of the southern bank of the Danube also belong to Czechoslovakia. Among the other excursions to be made from Bratislava is the trip to Železna Studánka (Eisenbründl), with its iron springs and a small lake.

Farther up the river, at the confluence of the Morava (Moravia's stream) and the Danube, are the castle ruins of Děvín, situated on a high rock. Trips are also possible on Czechoslovak and other steamers down the Danube to Parkán, the last Czechoslovak river port; the scenery, however, is rather flat. The port of Komárno, passed on the way, has attained to considerable importance in the last few years. It is the emporium and outlet for the wooded valleys to the north. Still farther on, on the Hungarian side, there are the prominent Cathedral of Estergom and the ruins of Sultan Soliman's fortress at Visegrád.

The south of Slovakia borders on the wine-producing part of Hungary, *i.e.* the Tokaj district, and, indeed, a "Tokaj" is also made in Slovakia. Palaguay, one of the best wines in Czechoslovakia, is obtained from grapes grown around Bratislava.

In the past, the cultural centre of Slovakia has been the small town of Turčianský Svätý Martin, which was the seat of the ill-fated first Slovenská Matica (Slovak Treasury) of objects of national art and industry. Eventually a private company opened a new Slovak museum

Košice

there, and to-day the old Slovenská Matica has been more securely established.

The economic and cultural centre of Eastern Slovakia is Košice. Economically the trade of the higher valleys comes to Košice on the River Hornad at the beginning of the plain. The town is regularly built in the form of an ellipse. The long axis is the Hlavnâ ulica (Main Avenue), and the short one Mlýnská ulica (Mill Street). The other smaller streets run approximately parallel with these two main thoroughfares, and still bear curious names relating to trades, *e.g.* Butchers' Street, Locksmiths' Street, etc., which were assigned to them at a time when they did represent the quarters of the followers of the different callings.

The Cathedral of St. Elizabeth is the most imposing edifice in Košice. It was begun in 1290, but not completed until the close of the next century. The west and north portals are adorned with interesting Gothic sculpturings, somewhat unusual in their theme for a Catholic or any other Church. (In one, high Church dignitaries are being consigned to Hell.) The late Gothic high altar is noteworthy for the forty-eight early German paintings on a gold ground and secured on folded screens, so arranged that only twelve are visible in the ordinary way.

Also in the Hlavná ulica is the thirteenth-century Chapel of St. Michael, the old Urbanova Tower and the modern (1899) municipal theatre—the oldest in Slovakia.

The East Slovakia Museum contains many interesting objects of historical, and especially ethnographical, value. Besides these are pictures, armour, statuary, books and manuscripts, and the famous jug of Janošek, the Slovak Robin Hood. It leaks now because his sweetheart knocked the bottom out of it after his capture!

A few miles from Košice is the spa Herl'any, famous for its intermittent geyser, which emits a spout of mineral water every six hours to a height of about 50 feet, and

rising from a depth of 1,300 feet below the surface of the earth. The origin of the geyser is the accumulation of carbon dioxide gas, which forces up the water.

Slovakia is not so much a writer's land as an artist's. Industrially it is not so extensively developed as Bohemia or Moravia, but its mineral wealth is considerable. Iron ore is found at Špiš, and gold is mined and minted at Kremnica.

Trenčin

CHAPTER XI

SOME SLOVAK SPAS

There are many interesting resorts and beautiful watering-places in the eastern part of Czechoslovakia, but they are for the most part unknown outside Central Europe. The majority of them are conveniently reached from Bratislava, and the better known ones are situated on the southern slopes of the Carpathians, especially around the High Tatras.

The journey from Bratislava to the Tatras takes the traveller up the wooded and undulating valley of the Váh and through what is perhaps the best part of Slovakia. Piešťany is the first of the many spas in the Váh district. It is a State-owned thermal resort, and has about 20,000 visitors annually, who mostly come for rest-cure and mud baths. A remarkable curative thermal mud is thrown up volcanically and collects in the basins of the hot springs, forming a soft mass which is used as compresses. For home treatment the mud is dried, pressed, and preserved in cubes, which have a radio-activity of 3,200 Mache units per kilo (or 1,500 Mache units per pound).

Continuing up the valley of the Váh, the ancient town of Trenčin is reached. Trenčin was once a Roman military camp, and received its name from the General Terencius, who served under Marcus Aurelius. There remains a Latin inscription of A.D. 179 upon a limestone rock. Trenčin attained prominence at the beginning of the fourteenth century, when it was the capital of Matthew Čak, who ruled for a short time as "King of Slovakia". Its old castle overlooking the Váh was impregnable in mediæval times. The deep well was dug by Turkish prisoners of war, although legend has it that a Turk dug it to obtain the release of his betrothed, who had been carried off as a slave by Stephen Zapolsky. Since the fire

of 1790 the castle has fallen into disuse. To-day Trenčin is the capital of the county of that name, although it is little beyond a small town of 10,000 inhabitants.

The next town up the Váh is Teplá, an important junction where one branch goes to Trenčianské Teplice, a picturesque spa situated in the wooded West Carpathians. It was probably known in Roman times, but the efficacy of its numerous sulphurous springs was only recognised about five hundred years ago.

A lame shepherd, wandering in search of good pasturage for his flocks, chanced upon a valley in which there was a small pool, from the surface of which a peculiar odour arose. Obeying a natural impulse, he dipped his aching feet into the warm water. The comfort he derived led him to make repeated visits, until one day his fellow-villagers saw him walking home without his crutch. Such is the legend told to-day at Trenčianské Teplice, and whether the story is true or not the hot pools and thermal springs are there; and if the shepherd's staff has been lost, there are thousands of other crutches stored away unobtrusively in a park shelter where only children or the curious will notice them. If the chief industry of Trenčianské Teplice is good health, the crutches testify to its success. Nevertheless, only a small percentage of the visitors take the sulphur baths or mud treatment. If they bathe, they do so in the lake, which is free from sulphurous odours and is pleasantly warm, whereas the spring waters are hot, almost uncomfortably so. Only one is cool enough to drink, and its odour makes it rather distasteful, for it is reminiscent of the election egg. A silver coin placed in it soon becomes tarnished by its sulphur content. The mud here, just as at Piešťany, is used for compresses. It is purely inorganic and of remarkably constant composition, and is free from bacterial life. The baths have been built over the springs to dispense with the need for pipes, and the daily yield of spring water for the baths is 9,000,000

Piešťany

Trenčianské Teplice

litres, or 2,000,000 gallons. As if this were not enough, there are fresh mountain springs, the supply from one of which is bottled for table use, as it contains only sulphates and bicarbonates.

Nestling in the valley between the slopes of the West Carpathians, its sub-alpine climate has earned for Trenčianské Teplice the title of "Pearl of the Carpathians". Like most Slovak towns, it has a main thoroughfare, Wilsonovo ulica, and a few short side streets. At one end of the Wilson Street is the park, and at the other is the square in front of the Grand Hotel Teplice, from the balconies of which the points of vantage on the surrounding hills can be discerned. From the hills, as one looks down, the hotel stands out from all other buildings, since it has four stories, whilst the other buildings do not usually go beyond two. By following any one of the paths ascending from the park one is bound to come to some spot of interest—a robbers' cave, the table-water spring, the wooden deer all scarred with names, or one of the many wayside shrines to be seen everywhere in Czechoslovakia.

Continuing northward by road or rail Štrba is reached, and from here by cog railway the traveller is taken to Štrbské Pleso, the best known of the Tatra resorts. The High Tatras, or Vysoké Tatrý, are the highest range of mountains in the Czechoslovak republic, and rise to a height of 8,636 feet. Their wild ruggedness probably originated from the glacial ages, but there are no glaciers there now, although mountain lakes abound. Štrbské Pleso, 4,500 feet above the sea-level, is the best known of these romantic lakes, which popular superstition has made the peasants regard as "Eyes of the Sea". The "town" consists of little more than two State-owned hotels, a few villas, cafés, shops and cottages. The deep lake is only separated from the steep slope of the mountain-side by a long narrow ledge of land no more than a hundred yards wide. It is in this small space that the "town" and the

stations of the funicular railway to Štrba and the electric line to Lomnica and Poprád are situated.

Every conceivable type of mountain excursion is possible from Štrbské Pleso; easy climbs and difficult ascents requiring experienced guides may be undertaken from this point. Some ascents, *e.g.* to Skok Waterfall, can be made in half a day, others, like the climbing of the Kriván, require a whole day. A pleasant walk without much climbing is through the pine woods to Popradské Pleso, an isolated lake about an hour's walk from Štrbské Pleso.

Connections can be made with Starý Smokovec, another climatic and tourist centre, and with Tatranská Lomnica. Between and beyond these there are many smaller resorts which receive numbers of visitors during the summer and winter seasons. At Dobšina to the south are some remarkable ice caverns, whilst near Liptovský Svätý Mikulaš are the limestone caves of Demänova, the extent of which has not yet been ascertained. They form a remarkable subterranean area replete with stalactites and stalagmites, which some authorities consider to be even more remarkable than those of Macocha, near Brno.

Other spas of more than local importance deserve some mention. Thus there is Sliač in the wooded slopes of the Hron, a tributary of the Danube. Again, Lubochňa is much favoured by Czechoslovaks in search of a quiet holiday in pleasant surroundings.

The Tatras near Smokovec

CHAPTER XII

RUTHENIA, OR SUB-CARPATHIAN RUSSIA

From Košice it is a four-hours' railway journey to Užhorod, the capital and westernmost town of Ruthenia, or Sub-Carpathian Russia, a province known officially as Podkarpatská Rus. There are direct carriages from Prague to Užhorod, and even to Jasiňa in the extreme east of Ruthenia, and the most remote railway station in Czechoslovakia. These carriages are attached to a fast train as far as Čop, after which the train becomes a slow one. The journey from Prague is made *via* Bohumín in Silesia, and Košice and Čop in Slovakia.

Čop has a mixed population, for it touches on Ruthenia, and is also on the Hungarian frontier. From this railway junction the slow train goes northward up the valley of the River Už to Užhorod, and sometimes to Užok, right up in the Carpathians, and of interest as the point at which the Russians penetrated old Hungary in the early part of the war. Its cemetery of war graves bears witness to this. The journey from Čop to Užhorod takes about one-and-a-half hours, although the distance is only 22 kilometres.

In the course of its journey from Čop to Jasiňa the Czechoslovak train leaves the country at Marmaros Sihot and travels for some twenty miles through Rumania, for the River Tisa is the frontier, and the railway connecting the Ruthenian valleys runs south of the river just here.

On arrival at Užhorod, a town of some 20,000 inhabitants, it is at once to be seen that a medley of races dwell there. Signs are written in Russian, Czechoslovak, Hungarian, Yiddish and German. Trade is almost exclusively in the hands of the orthodox Jews, who wear long black gabardines and curious flat-crowned hats, sometimes adorned with fur. The men have long dark

beards, whilst even boys have greasy side curls. Many of the shops were uninviting, and almost all were closed on Saturday.

Užhorod possesses two hotels, the better of which is the Koruna, which has an excellent restaurant and kavárna, considering it is so remote from the west. It is the evening *rendezvous* of the Czechoslovaks and officials engaged in making the town worthy of its position as the capital of an autonomous province. New buildings are being erected, making a business and residential suburb just outside the old town, which is chiefly a collection of one-story mud houses painted over and thatched or tiled. In 1918 as many as 80 per cent. of the population were illiterate. Schools had to be built and teachers found in Bohemia and Slovakia who were willing to endure a few years in uncongenial surroundings, for it must be admitted that Užhorod is not at present a town one would choose to pass one's life in.

Great improvements have been made and are still being made to increase the attractions of the town and to construct essential works. A number of new buildings and modern houses and a large red synagogue have been erected, and in time all the old insanitary dwellings will be demolished.

Among the interesting sights of Užhorod perhaps the most imposing are the thirteenth-century castle, which is now the palace of the Bishop of Mukačevo, and the adjoining Greco-Roman or Uniate Church, to which a seminary is attached. The palace possesses an extensive library, not confined to theological treatises, and a valuable collection of pictures. In one room there is a wall tablet which says that at one time the Hungarian crown had rested there. All the rooms were tastefully furnished (in striking contrast to the hovels which constitute the majority of Užhorod's houses). The Uniate Church dates from 1850, and has a number of beautiful ornaments and

religious pictures. The large decorative grill before the altar distinguishes this Greco-Catholic church from the Roman ones. In an ante-room is the saddle of one of Maria Theresa's horses. Outside, in an old coach-house, is a carriage which also belonged to her. Almost the only other object of interest is a recent statue to S. Jencik, the Ruthenian poet. A small new park and garden have been laid out in the Masaryk Square, where a monument has been erected to President Masaryk, and which was unveiled on October 28, 1928, the tenth anniversary of the birth of the republic.

Not far from Užhorod is a gypsy camp of perhaps a hundred souls. They have been encouraged to settle down and follow some trade. Most unique of all, the Czechs have built a school for them. This is the first gypsy school ever opened, and the children of various ages are taught to count and read and write, an exceedingly arduous task for even the most patient of teachers. More to their liking are the music lessons with violins, which form a most important item in the school equipment. The children also like dancing, which they indulge in as strangers approach. Up to about seven years of age they frequently dispense with clothing, and are scarcely familiar with soap and water. The grown-up members of this community are beginning to realise the benefits accruing from a settled mode of life as compared with the uncertainty of their previous nomadic existence.

A couple of hours from Užhorod by motor-bus is Sobrance, where there are two alkaline mineral water springs, and a little farther on there is a lake which shares with those in the Tatras the name of "Eyes of the Sea", Mořské Oko. Within walking distance of Užhorod is Horjany, with its ancient Roman rotunda, said to be the oldest architectural relic in Ruthenia.

From the Bishop's palace it is possible to see the mountains in Poland when looking in a northerly direction,

whilst to the south the Hungarian frontier is less than twenty miles away. Thus it will be seen that Ruthenia is narrow and not a large province.

A town with almost as many inhabitants at Užhorod is Mukačevo, built below the thirteenth-century Palanka castle or fortress, which stands on an isolated trachytic cone about 600 feet high. The ancient town of Berehevó (Beregszász), also below the mountains and at the beginning of the plain, is the centre of the Ruthenian wine trade, for whilst Ruthenia is almost entirely agricultural (especially buffalo breeding and forestry), there are one or two industrial undertakings. Another is the wood distillation factory at Perečin, whilst naphtha is pumped at Luh and Užok. Pottery is made at Užhorod from a Slovakian kaolin, for the deposits of this mineral at Dubrinice await development, like much of the mineral wealth of Eastern Czechoslovakia. The salt mines at Marmarošská Solotvína, which supply the bulk of the country's needs, are best approached through Rumania.

The villages up the mountain valleys are dependent upon poor agricultural crops for their subsistence, and upon their timber trade for their other requirements. The tourist will therefore find that there is not much to be had in the way of food in some of these isolated villages situated on the banks of the torrents, down which, at flood times, the inhabitants send their timber.

Interesting villages are to be passed up the valley of the Terešva. At Neresnice is an important Red Cross hospital, where enthusiasts are helping to stamp out unnecessary disease and improve the health of the Ruthenians. Farther up are two German-speaking settlements, Uščorna (Konigsfeld) and Německá Mokrá (Deutsch Mokra), between which lies Ruská Mokrá, inhabited by Ruthenians. The population of these two German villages are descendants of the Saxons, who were settled there at

A Typical Ruthenian Village

the time of Maria Theresa, and they have preserved their language and customs ever since

The sources of the Black and White Tisa are in the most easterly valley of Sub-Carpathian Russia, along which there are a number of villages, inhabited by Huculs, a characteristically sturdy type of Ruthenian with more elaborate costumes and better developed handicrafts. Jasiňa and Rachov are the two most important villages. Kvasy, between them, contains springs of alkaline waters. All these places are rapidly being improved, and Rachov in particular now possesses many new brick buildings. Its streets are being paved and drains laid. The two sections of the town are connected by two bridges (one for pedestrians only), and it forms a convenient centre for ascending Pop Ivan (6,000 feet) and Hoverla (6,800 feet), the highest point in Ruthenia. Bogdan, an interesting settlement at the extreme end of Czechoslovakia is also reached from Rachov.

Jasiňa, the last Czechoslovak village, has an area greater than Paris, for it is fifteen miles long and nearly as many wide. Its population is about ten thousand, and its simple houses are scattered along the main road and over the surrounding area. This straggling village is undergoing a transformation too, and as soon as it possesses an hotel among its new buildings it will attract tourists and travellers for the sake of the magnificent, well-wooded surrounding hills and valleys. At present only emergency accommodation at the quarters of officials is available, and tourists who visit this part of Ruthenia must be prepared to accept a minimum of comfort for a maximum of natural beauty afforded by the mountains, forests, and streams.

Whilst the mountain valleys are inhabited almost exclusively by various types of Ruthenes (except for the Jews), the villages along the southern border (through which the railway passes) have a mixed population, in-

*

cluding Rumanians and Hungarians as well as Slavs and a high percentage of Jews. The smaller villages are not particularly attractive, but Chust, Berehovo, and Mukačevo are interesting and of some commercial importance. Chust is an important market centre for the peasants living up the middle valleys, and on market days is thronged with villagers in the characteristic attire of the Bojki, the type of Ruthenian from this district. Volové, the largest village in the centre of Ruthenia, is perhaps the most typical of all for its wooden houses, church, and synagogue, and for the dresses of its inhabitants.

The churches here, and also throughout the province and in some places in East Slovakia, are built of wood. Even the tiles are of wood, for this is plentiful and needs little manufacture. Everything that can be made of wood is constructed of that material. The internal decoration consists of rough carving, and there are crude but well executed paintings on peeled wood, as well as a few (usually valueless) sacred pictures and ikons. In many places the only buildings of brick are the new schools which the Czechs have recently erected.

Another feature of village life attracts immediate attention, namely the drawing of water. Water is drawn from wells in a peculiar manner, as in the Ukraine not far away, by a bucket attached to a pole. This is joined to another, which at the free end is heavily weighted so that the bucket is always in the air. When water is required the pole with the bucket is pulled down until the latter is under water, when it is allowed to rise again of its own free will. The arrangement is called a crane, after the long-legged water-bird.

A Wooden Church in Ruthenia

A Party of Ski-ers in the Tatras

CHAPTER XIII

IN WINTER

Czechoslovakia is not without charms when it is carpeted with snow. On approaching the country, either at Cheb or at Podmokly, the snow-clad heights give a most fairy-like Christmas appearance, which is increased by the fact that the branches of the pine-trees are bowed down with snow. The rivers, too, are frozen over, and such sports as skating and ice-hockey are played on the Vltava, especially at Prague, where the ice often attains a thickness of a foot. When tolls were exacted at the bridges from pedestrians and vehicular traffic, advantage was taken to cross on the ice. This is no longer necessary, but still it is not uncommon to find young people riding motor-cycles on the ice. Later, as it thaws, men may be seen amidstream chopping up the ice and guiding it to the banks, where it is tossed into carts and taken away to be stored in cellars for use in summer.

Snow falls for days at a stretch. This is good for the resorts which cater for winter-sport enthusiasts, and in the Giant's Mountains a depth of several feet is the rule. In the towns it becomes a nuisance, not because it melts and becomes mud, as in London, but because its mere bulk impedes traffic. Consequently the dustcarts are requisitioned to enable its removal to some convenient place near the river.

At Christmas time Prague is particularly interesting, for not only are the shops decorated for the season, but huge Christmas-trees are placed in the Old Town Square, St. Wenceslas' Square, and elsewhere, to be illuminated at night, and at different points country-folk are selling the smaller ones, for no home fails to keep up the old tradition.

At this time of the year those who can depart for the

mountains to indulge in ski-ing, tobogganing and other vigorous sports. The winter sports season lasts from early December till the end of February. The chief centres are the Šumava (Bohemian Forest), the Giant's Mountains in North-West Bohemia, around Radhost' in Moravia and the High Tatras in Slovakia. To all of these districts the Czechoslovak railways run cheap excursions called "Sportsmen's Expresses". On all the ranges there are good ski-runs, but the Giant's Mountains are the most popular perhaps, because they are the nearest high range to Prague. As the train arrives at Vrch Labi, the railway terminus at the foot of the mountains, the tinkling of the sleigh-horses' bells serves as a reminder that the roads the traveller used in the summer are now obscured by deep snow. Even the hedges may be covered and only the tops of the pines remain. Sometimes the telegraph wires may be touched. Indeed, the poles may be the sole indication of the route to the higher villages and hotels.

The sleighs convey the visitor to the hotels at Špindlerův Mlýn (Spindlermuhle), and then higher up are the more compact and more comprehensive hotels called *Baude*, each of which is almost a village in itself, complete with post office, telegraph, telephone and general supply stores. It will also possess a doctor, carpenter, smith and engineer to treat accidents and make any necessary repairs.

From the ridges, which attain a height of 4,500 to 5,300 feet, there are both short and straight runs for beginners, and more difficult runs with tree-tops and other obstacles to test the skill of the expert. It is perhaps not generally known that ski-ing was first practised at Schreiberau, in North Bohemia, in the middle of last century, long before it became popular in Switzerland and elsewhere.

Equally advantageous are the ski-runs in the Bohemian Forest, and of late years Marienbad and other well-known summer resorts have begun to attract visitors by holding

The High Tatras

winter sports events on the surrounding hills. For those who feel less energetic it is pleasant to descend from the higher points to the villages by using the glorious toboggan runs. Indeed, it is customary to ascend by horse-sleigh and to return by toboggan.

International ice-hockey matches and tournaments are played chiefly in the Tatras. The resorts there, especially Štrbské Pleso and Tatranská Lomnica, attract many ski-ers, whilst their lakes are the scene of ice-hockey matches and other games. Owing to its height and the surrounding high mountains, Štrbské Pleso has the longest winter season, the snow remaining till the end of April.

The winter attractions of many other spas could be cited, and mention should be made of the South Bohemian lakes, which are popular during the season. In fact, it can be said that Czechoslovakia is as interesting in winter as in summer.

12° East of Greenwich
13°
30'
ALTENBURG
GERA
DRESDEN
FREIBERG
CHEMNITZ
ZWICKAU
GREIZ
PLAUEN
Veipriy
Jachymov
Kraslice
Boxbach
Aš
Lázně
Loket
Karlovy Vary
Podhorany
Ohře
CHEB
Žlutice
Mariánské Lázně
Tepla
Stříbro
Nýřany
Přimda
Horšovský Týn
Domažlice
Lechovice
1039
Mirt
STRAUB
30'
50°
30'
49°

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